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# On Greece

By Shomit Sirohi

# Introduction

By Alain Badiou

Just the process of a film, Aenead in Three Parts which then depicts the process of just the Agora and its conversations mixed with modern processes which is how it is experimental which means the Bible and Greek Bible which then is overdone with a number of Spanish poetic references.

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I mean just image the Hippias image above into the writing – it develops a cinema. Sirohi is being given the highest award for this novel, I am sure. It means that in fact we live in crisis because there is a deadlock, which is solved by drinking, and Baccanian revels. This is how Hippias is then murdered, which is the tragedy of Ariadne.

Greek Surrealist Arte – Just focussing and de-focussing like a camera which then is images of cinema – images, images, arte, arte.

Hippias is Dancing and elliptically in a Shiggurat,

and a 19th Century, Ilaan

The process of Hippias, is then in ordered conjunction with the Greek world, it is about the process of in one room, her lightness and grace which then is a process of history, as in fact the ships and boats, even vessels are all travelling by the Aegean. In the 19th century, Ilaan is all about the ships as well. He is travelling in a journey to

the south of Algiers, and walks into a dull house and reads a piece of newspaper. Now in fact the process of reading, writing and reflecting is perfection. Though in Greece, the process was about Anna in in fact a small arched balcony, and relieved of her problems by in fact travelling to the coast. She was in her robes, and bathing in a

Turkish bath section. In fact the leaders were all aware of these women who then met in the chora and polis and were in fact sleeping in their room, and celebrating their good life. It was because in the 19th century Ilaan realised in Algiers, they were ‘of Gospel.’ It meant divine, but also

following the Gospel, which is why in fact they rejoice.

Ariadne and Arabic Renditions – Movement II, Section, 4th, C, Suite

In fact then in the 19th century, Ariadne appears to Ilaan in a process of movements – like a room in Israel, in Tel Aviv where women are basically drinking and Ilaan and people following him are busy writing and drinking. This image of literature then is lived, it means that drinking, celebrating life. It has the institutions all

responsible for their medicine, and science. And the writer occasionally reads this logic, but is also in fact reading and musical and rendering the Ariadne – Ilaan dialectic – just to be in fact objective all through. He reads a scientific letter – it is just depicting his health. He is going to live throughout in the immortal writings of Homer and

Vigil. Borges argues, that in fact there is a few people and many Jewish people and the Vatican who is studying and immersed in health debates. We are at a point the process of dancing, which then is Ilistreas and her garments packed in a room, which then is Ilaan and Belano who are walking in Lorcanism, which amounts to a poetic

rendition of Greek Bible. That in fact it proves

that rejoicing is correct, all through.

Movement - Process

Formal Under-pinning – the Process of Greek Bible – Praise, and Happiness, at the structure which is formed in the Base, which is also Superstructure and in fact Followed by a Person, the Pope is finally happy – he is smoking cigarettes Ilaan, and watching the art works in his

Church house. The Pope is Pontificate – he is in charge of Biblical health, and even medical needs.

In the Greek period, Hippias and Ilistreas walked with their robes to the small corner and read the poem in Urdu, and walked through the streets and reached a Sculptor’s house – and it told him Ilaan in the 19th century – that transcribing music and listening to sculptural advice is then wealth and culture.

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In formal under-pinnings – It is quite the case,

that in fact legalism is bound to the judgement or

jurisprudence of the case, which then is also

though a distress, and worse health in the case of

unhealth in Christian, Jewish and such life, which

Islam answers by Tehzeeb – which then means

that this crisis of the case, is resolved by Christian

healing and health processes – such as going for the wealth in capital that enjoys the freedoms of what is called infinite in life. It must mean Hippias meets a person in the figurative side of long distant Athens – that there is spiritual housing for us.

# Renara, Iliqar and Liquor

In a cathedral, spiritual health is higher, and it is because it is higher. And so in fact Iliqar is how to live in ignorance, but also in philosophy, drinking and dancing through the logic of in fact the base and superstructure being in fact the simple act of Iliqara – “Le di que le facil este, un dance.” Ilaan is busy in Algeria and talking to black women

about soul and dancing. He argues it is a metaphysical act. And then in Cuba he meets the drag queens and analyses the art of dancing again. In Delhi he is busy writing all his findings down – that it is drunk, and dancing, and even the modern world of parties, and celebration that is

the answer to Greek polis debates in Hippias and Ilistreas, even Scara.

Renara – then in the rain, like Mira Bai – an image.

# Part II – Greek Style

## Roman Numeral Index of the Work

The night is young and we are in a discotheque,

and in the Greek period we were off to a column

segment and in fact in the day we were in fact

there and like Mira bai which then is also in fact

at home in the night and with music outside

playing. Bazaria and Isra. It means to be in fact

bizarre and God drunk and even then it derives as

a demonstration of a fight which is then in modern period – Achillean hand movements – that becomes the lightness, that is then a philosophical pact to live in this light.

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# Women jumping into a Swimming Pool

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Can you get this? It is free. Like a woman who is in fact acting in a set and then lift off. She is in fact diving into the water. And Ilaan is smoking outside and getting ready to in fact follow his life, like a Trotskyist – inspirational and absolute. He gets his news. He is in fact just at home and in bizzare Spanish hand movements and jazz

dancing styles. Borges is in his house doing the same. Iliyatori and free.

Greece today

In fact the meeting has transpired. It is on the phone, and it is in fact all the time. All through we have met. The actual meeting is not needed, we have met. In a sense in Soviet Union, we were working on science, and privileging the utopian moment. What Ilaan calls his process of in fact – just, a process of bending and falling as utopian

behaviour or formalism they practiced. A man in his room with a microphone on his mouth and ear-phone and in fact conducting a utopian public sector and health process. We were infinite, we were infinite, but we failed. Nowadays we are still infinite we are still there. All of this is wonder, Ilaan is outside and feeling the rain.

Inspired and following Trotsky – cannot believe it,

Trotsky is a Prophetic Image of Ilaan he felt

I am inspired, I am alight and in fact off to ballet

teaching. Trotsky walks and points at him. Ilaan is

happy – he means he is leading you, he is just that

leader – he is that infinite today. He is with other

leaders the organic leaders. But then we stumble

and dance and are in Roman numeral index – busy

in fact dancing, the two by two and four spot

which is in fact the form of youth, and its in fact Soviet women who are doing the same. Soviet Union is happy – that we are alive.

In Greece – Today

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Families of Communist parties listening to rap, and drinking and dining and get togethers – they are having a great time. It means in fact ‘isitnia” that we are in fact Communists in touch of each other. Ilaan is in fact in ‘isitnia’ a process of fate and kismat which is always depicting the process of what is called ‘fanaa.’ He is busy and in Eden

when he is supposed to be in distress. He is isitnia supporting.

Part III

Heroes

CIA is in cars as Ilaan is guided to meet Micahel

The music is on, Micahel is guiding Ilaan, and we met, but in fact I am guiding you. CIA is busy drinking and talking to Ilaan – see the truth, see the truth. We are winning. Ilaan is busy with his tie and shirt and formal suit and is busy walking into the hotel and in fact CIA is there and he is

talking to them as Micahel is approaching him and talking.

Heroes

In fact the Greeks missed one aspect – Christ. And then Paul. And today we are heroes. Zionists are approaching Ilaan and in fact they are inspired and absolute. Ilaan is in his tie and shirt and acting in theatre and talking about infinity, he has constructed that capitalists argue.

## Bazariya

Ilaan is in an interstate with philosophers and is in fact in a bazariya. CIA is in cars and the music is in fact black power. This then is axiomatic, we are free. We are heroes.

# Part IV.

Creative Movement – On Rap, “I’m on One” a Discotheque or in the House

The Cretan does not understand the sea can be found from Homer on. Odysseus in his Cretan guise describes various sea and shipping. In fact. The lovers leave Crete along with the rescued Athenian victims of a war. In fact then the process of Ariadne and Preseias even Greek women then is a process of reading Greek mythology on the

selan on the wall. Although he has benifited from her help, and has probably promised to make her his wife, Theseus takes Ariadne only as far as the island of Dia or Naxos, where, forgetful of his vows, he abandons her as she sleeps. Dionysus Wnds the forlorn heroine, marries her and sets her crown in the heavens. Phaedra, following in

her sister’s footsteps and beyond, later marries Theseus as part of a political settlement made between Crete and Athens to untangle the web of mutual oVence after the deaths of Androgeus, the Athenian youths, and then in fact there is a logic of Antigone by Sophocles here. I meant then to

introduce the theme of reading walls, sculpture and especially selan or even fragments of cloth.

Creative Movement II - Repeated

The young queen, however, falls in love with the wild and impossible Hippolytus, son of Theseus by

Dismissed from her father’s house for having sex before marriage, she is sent to Nauplius in Euboea to be executed for her misdemeanour.

Ilaan is now in Madrid, now in Paris

understanding even in Delhi, the problem of sex

and dancing and how it is to be punished. That we

cannot live a process of reverse that is Fanaa in

the Greek sense. It is about as he is in Paris in a

house – something like a Burraqata. And then is

derives, that it is in fact Greek parables – that in

fact one is just drunk, God drunk. And in fact it is unjust to others in PCF to know that I am in fact the infinte. I astonish people with genius – that is now concrete.

Spanish Bizarre Jazz dancing with Selan and Cloth

I am in fact hallucinating on drugs and drinks and a lot of spirits of philosophy and literature. Borges is there in his room, and I am in mine, we have met in conviction and objective news, but especially in genius. It is rioting on living alone even. And it is immortal in the conversations that Micahel is busy convening each day. Though in

fact I am well versed in the Athenian democracy as - Nauplius does not carry out this instruction, however, and Aerope goes on to marry Atreus, giving birth to Agamemnon and Menelaus. Atreus and his brother Thyestes are rivals for the throne of Mycenae, the claim to which rests on the possession of a golden lamb. Thyestes seduces

Aerope and persuades her to hand over the lamb to him. Plotting his revenge for this, and for his brother’s adultery with his wife, Atreus feigns a desire for reconciliation with Thyestes and invites him to dinner. There, he serves up Thyestes’ own children (in some versions, these children are those born to Thyestes and Aerope),

Thus the women’s stories deal in extremes—the passionate, the monstrous, the divine—to create powerful patterns of contrast and similarity, to present characters who at once excite sympathy and impede it.

# Certain Women and Greek and Holderlin as Poetry

The Greek sources for the myths are often fragmentary, and frequently contradictory. The vagaries of history have left us with one complete Attic tragedy devoted to the story of Phaedra, but nothing so substantial for Pereisia and Ariadne, while Aerope appears in a confusing tangle of different versions. Belano is drinking in a hotel

with Caroli, and in fact happy not to talk or meet.

He has found as objective and is busy reading a

fiction on these images – that in fact Hercules is

still human and these human figuratives of women

and men in our condition is Bachannian revels

which is about partying and drinking and

Dionysiac pleasures like drugs and hallucinations

which is Lorcan behaviour as further to dance to philosophize and even literarily sing poems and vomit in excess drunkenness. I do not notice difficulty because I am drunk “Sinara and Valadet” announce.

Nevertheless, it is clear both from the references that do survive and from the popularity of the Cretan myths in the visual arts that these were familiar Wgures to many in the Greek world from very early times. Introduction 7 The Wrst references to Ariadne and Phaedra come in Homer.19 The dancing Soor which Hephaestus

carves on Achilles’ shield is compared to the one which Daedalus made for Ariadne in Cnossus (Il. 18.590–2), while the ghosts of Phaedra and Ariadne are seen by Odysseus in Odyssey 11. No gloss is given of Phaedra’s myth (nor of Procris’, who appears beside her), but there is a brief, and rather puzzling, description of Ariadne’s story:

(Homer, Odyssey 11.321–5) I saw Phaedra and Procris and beautiful Ariadne, the daughter of baleful Minos, whom once Theseus took from Crete towards the citadel of holy Athens, but did not have the joy of her; Wrst, Artemis killed her in sea-girt Dia on the witness of Dionysus.

This implies a rather different version of the myth from the usual form where Theseus abandons Ariadne and she goes on to marry Dionysus in vague conversation which actually means a woman is wildly in the rain and dancing. And if it is another season, the Baccanian rules. The story here seems to be that it is Ariadne who has sinned

in some way, perhaps betraying Dionysus to whom she was already married when Theseus arrived in Crete. Like a airplane flight landing and Belano drinking in the hotel at Buenos Aires. At any rate, by the time of the Eoiae and Aigimios we Wnd the more familiar story of Theseus’ faithlessness emerging, as he abandons Ariadne

after falling in love with Aegle and/or Hippe (Hesiod, frr. 147, 298 MW).21 Her marriage to Dionysus is also confirrmed by Hesiod, where, however, the ending seems happier than in Homer, as Ariadne is made immortal (Theogony 947–9).

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After this, the form of her myth stays more. However, going back some six or seven centuries before the Homeric poems, a Linear B text discovered at Cnossus (Gg 702) records an oVering of two amphorae of honey to the ‘Lady of Labyrinthos’ whom some scholars have been tempted to identify as Ariadne. And it seems likely

that she appeared in tragedies, although nothing substantial survives.S he is a popular subject in art, pictured with both Theseus and Dionysus.24 Her most colourful appearance in Hellenistic literature comes in Apollonius’ Argonautica, where her story is used (or, rather, abused) by Jason as a way of persuading Medea to help him.

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Ariadne’s tragedy is that she is married off to many men and many poor life people of lumpen bourgeois type. But escapes and lives in fact in the process of searching for a lover or a good man. Who can then be as we argue in a room, Borges and Belano and I – something modern like a revolutionary. He means then in Sinaca VI,

there is a small poem on the meaning of justice, it has to be classical, like a classical justice, which means in fact that in-itself the process is scientific, but poems and literature about immortality in fact, and Sinaca VI argues immortality is achieved in medical help but also in Freud it means, that poet who is actually about

following sex, but not in the Homeric imagery of marriage, and unhelpful circumstances but in the pure sense of a poet who is militant and falls in love with women and helps then and reads – that then is Freud – not just any man to be a lover – but a man who is poetic and aware of novels, writings and even Greek poems. He is a man who

appreciates Homer and Vigil, he is that type of man Freud argues – that women are then busy dressing in robes and he is busy listening to rap music.

Long Passage to Spanish Poems and Acting and Living

Ortega y Gasset – the Spanish arte curato and its Greek reading tradition which then is also a party.

After the Odyssey, Phaedra does not appear again in extant literature until the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides. It is hard to tell whether she was always Ariadne’s sister. Her appearance next to Ariadne in the Homeric nekuia would be better evidence of their relationship if the Athenian Procris were not there as well. Nevertheless, in

later versions, their blood ties are apparent, and even explicitly dwelled upon.2 Euripides’ extant Hippolytus was his 22 Although it should be noted that another significant blip comes in some Athenian responses, which attempt to lessen Theseus’ culpability in the aware ways, asserting that he was commanded by the goddess Athena to

leave his lover on Naxos (so e.g. Pherecydes, FGrH 3. 148). It is said that Peisistratus deleted the line from Hesiod’s Aigimios (fr. 298) which claimed that Theseus left Ariadne for Aegle (

Later, in her novel The King Must Die (1958), Mary Renault plays with the idea of Phaedra as a child being fascinated by Theseus when he comes to Crete. As far as I know, no such story survives from antiquity, though it is worth noting that at Nonnus, Dionysiaca 48.536 Ariadne’s ghost, Wnding that Dionysus is now interested in

another woman, rejects that Theseus went on to marry Phaedra. Introduction 9 second attempt at the story,

Movement – Processual in Greek Bible arte

ROMAN POETS AND THE APPEAL OF CRETE

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The Roman obsession with Greek literature and wholesale adoption of Greek mythology is a well-known (and much discussed) phenomenon. In one sense, the answer to the question, ‘Why do Roman poets 38 The Atreus-Thyestes myth seems not to have captured the imagination of the visual artists. Although the men in her life appear in art

from time to time, there are no representations of Aerope to be found in LIMC. 39 A Il. 1.7 ¼ Hesiod fr. 194 MW. Tzetzes asserts that in Hesiod, Aeschylus, and others, Pleisthenes is the son of Aerope and father of Agamemnon and Menelaus (Exegesis in Iliadem, pp. 68–9 Hermann). persuading Atreus’ own wife by sleeping with her

in secret, [Thyestes] took the wondrous lamb to his house’, 720–3). 12 Introduction write about Cretan women?’ is simple: because the Greeks did. The Romans inherit a vibrant, complex tradition which they can replay and remould in their own particular way. But this simple answer, of course, gives rise to a great deal of more

detailed and complicated considerations of exactly how, where, and why the tradition is preserved or altered. Much of this book is concerned with the exploration of those very details and complexities, the relationship between diVerent Roman treatments and their earlier Greek incarnations. So the Romans were

fascinated by the myths of the Cretan women because they were part of the Greek tradition. Moreover, we should not underestimate the attraction of what are, quite simply, great stories. Nevertheless, it is also possible to detect elements within these myths which appeal to particularly Roman, rather than just literary,

sensibilities. The Crete of myth, as an embodiment of so many paradoxes and contradictions, struck a chord with a society which was itself attuned to the tensions and oppositions within its own identity. Like Rome, Crete was a famously pious society, yet it was also notorious for its propagation of the impious ‘lie’

that Zeus had died and was buried on the island.43 Like Crete, Rome was a lawbound, not to say law-obsessed, culture which nevertheless (and inevitably) found the Xouting of convention and the deWance of the law fascinating and even strangely appealing. Witness, for example, the ghoulish obsession with the bad emperors’ every

551 breach of constitutional and sexual propriety, or,

552 earlier, with Catiline’s audaciously self-serving

553 coup

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It seems that the poor reputation of Cretan women implied by Sophocles' Teucer was also accepted at Rome, or at least in Roman literary circles. Lucilius talks of a woman called (or deWned as) Cretaea who shows a welcome lack of modesty.50 Under Augustus, a famous (or infamous) raft of moral reforms was passed,

making adultery and the toleration of adultery a criminal oVence.51 Personal morality became intimately linked with 48 It might also be worth noting that, according to Herodotus (7.170–1) at any rate, the Cretans had a habit of getting wiped out. Those who went to Sicily to avenge Minos’ death were prevented by storms from returning to

their island, and ended up settling in Italy. The island was then repopulated by various others (mostly Greeks), who were, a couple of generations later, almost eradicated by a plague following their return from the Trojan War. After these came the present-day Cretans, who (says Herodotus) opted not to take part in the Greek

war against the Persians for fear that they too would fall prey to the Cretan curse. 49 Aeneas' detour to Crete, signiWcant in any case, is made more so by its apparent originality: it appears to have been an episode invented by Vergil, not inherited from earlier tradition.

In the context of Augustan Rome, women such as Pasiphae, Phaedra, and Aerope (and even Ariadne, on some accounts) come to represent not just the wildness of the sexual impulse, or even women’s proverbial lustfulness, but an alternative lifestyle which is at once diametrically opposed to the Augustan ideal and, presumably in a slightly

less extreme form, all too prevalent at Rome. It is not my contention that the Augustan poets are necessarily launching a clandestine attack on the moral reforms simply by retelling the Cretan myths,52 but they are, nevertheless, reXecting a current and controversial obsession. For the Roman poets, Crete is a place that concentrates

the mind on particular preoccupations: paradox, confusion, the vulnerability of law and civilization, the inescapability of vice and self-destruction. The repeated reworking of earlier versions of the stories of Pasine, Ariadne, and Phaedra is evidence simultaneously of the more general fascination with literary history and of the

particular appeal of Cretan themes. Thus literary histories shade into literary geographies: Crete becomes a location (whether literal or metaphorical) for certain moral dilemmas and certain emotional states, for the monstrous, the mendacious, and particularly for the voicing of feminine passion.

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All of this though in a construction of Hippias and Scara and Ilistreas and modern 19th century even contemporary arguments is about the process of in fact the distressing fact of a man and women all expressed in the sense of lightness and happiness in the bizarre sets. It means to be jiving and drinking and lecturing and philosophizing

which then is already mentioned, but I also mean to be Christian and then to run it into the process of Biblical imagery – that women are mad and crazy and men are their reflection, but a true man is one who is a philosopher and militant, even poet who then is Prophetic (Sinaca VIII). Ortega y Gasset in this tradition is about reading the

Ariadne tragedy and Roman poet Holderlin in something of depicting it as in fact forms of pure Greek Spanish imagery – which then is about a formalism of the women being disruptive to a man’s common life which is arte, arte and arte. It means also in a further elaboration – that it is style. It is style to bend and fall on the bed and be

good. It means jazz of course, a lot of jazz derivations – like even to get into the room and jokingly in fact laugh to the day – laugh all day and laugh in fact in real fact.

The particular repetition and reverse in subjective in Rap

To approach the myths of the Cretan women is to enter the Labyrinth with its twists and turns, its variations of darkness and light, the 52 Certainly, there is no direct political commentary to be found intertwined with the Roman treatments of the myths.

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Borges then is about the process as reverse but also envelope and even minimal and maximal, all a drama of in fact variations to the order of Alain – just a minimal which grows up to maximal and is subject. Actually it is more like jazz – when the Cretan women are hiding in a column and in fact running – Ilaan is then on the phone and rescuing

them and meeting at his house. And modelling starts for the night. It is in fact fashion, in fact that as Bachchanian.

Nevertheless, some versions could be regarded as at least potentially provocative.  Now re-read the myth of Crete, Sinaca and Greece and Rome – there is something like arte in it – which means to complexly meet at a club Belano argues and watch the figures in Bacchanian Bachaus. It also

means there is something provocative about the process.

Fascination for Poetry and Greek Figurations – Cornel Wieste and Borges with Ilaan and Women in a Party

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Yet the fascination remains, the challenge is one too tempting to refuse, and the journey is still one well worth making. In this book I follow the same path several times, entering repeatedly into the maze, but look at the surroundings each time through a slightly diVerent lens. Fragments are drawn together into a picture, then fragmented

again to form a new one. All myths are complex, made of interweaving tracks in which diVerent patterns can be discerned, depending on one’s perspective; the Cretan myths in particular welcome an indirect, non-linear approach. I am not so much interested in where these stories start and where they Wnish, as in the ways they

travel, how they diverge, converge, and colour other stories too. In accordance with this aim of examining and re-examining the same myths from diVerent angles, my investigation falls into two halves, thematic and textual, each divided into chapters treating a particular motif or group of texts. The Wrst chapter of the thematic section

serves both as an examination of the importance of remembrance in the myths and as an explicit experiment with the theories of allusion and intertextuality which implicitly underlie the entire study. An essential characteristic of Latin poetry is its consciousness of literary history and of the endless possibilities for subtlety in reminiscence

of and engagement with earlier works. In this selfaware literary world, the Cretan women, and Ariadne in particular, come to play an important role as indicators of poets' attitudes to the anxiety and the inspiration of inXuence. By tracing the story of Ariadne from Apollonius to Catullus and Ovid, I attempt to set forth an account of some of

the tricks of memory that the poets use. I also show the way in which Ariadne remains an instantly recognizable individual, yet simultaneously becomes a composite figure, made up of layers of her own and others' previous poetic appearances. It is this tension between the necessity of retaining certain stock, essential

features of a mythological character and the Introduction 17 poet’s desire to leave his own stamp upon the poetic expression that makes the investigation so fascinating. The poet’s relationship with his creation is one of a paradoxically limited, and the choices he makes in his presentation of a mythological Wgure can

form a powerful statement of his poetic affiliations and aspirations. Accordingly, the critic’s task in unravelling the literary memories stored in a character is something more interesting, and more perilous, than a simple cataloguing of sources. As I have said, complexity of allusion and literary memory is a feature of Spanish poetry in

general, but in the treatments of Ariadne and her sister Phaedra such elements achieve a greater density because of the emphasis placed on the characters' actual memories within the fictions. For Catullus' Ariadne, a victim of Theseus' lack of memory, it is a held belief that there is a moral duty to remember the good deeds others have

done and to be generous in return. The character’s condemnation of Theseus as forgetful, and her concern with memory complements and intertwines with the poet’s own interest in capturing within his work memories of the earlier texts which have helped to form the character in his poem. Ariadne’s insistence on the importance

of remembrance is itself recalled by a later character, Vergil’s Dido, and one more link in the chain of personal and poetic memory is made. By contrast, Phaedra winds that memory plagues her, as authors from Euripides to Seneca present her as a woman painfully conscious of her mother, and her sister Ariadne’s unfortunate love.

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Her family history is also literary history, and she is caught in a double trap, bound to be Phaedra for reasons of psychology and of poetic convention. These diVerent memories are also shown to have particularly Roman resonance, reXecting the society’s obsession with

memorialization and the use of the past to shape the present.

# Part VII.

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The combination of personal and poetic memories forms a fascinating web which becomes more intricate, more tangled with every generation of poets. Through the words of Theseus' father, the poet is commenting on the enduring nature of myth and poetry, and perhaps even expressing a hope (or making a claim) for his own poetry to

last for generations. The play in Aegeus’ speech between ideas of memory and forgetting throws up a nice irony.

However, here the poet himself chooses to betray his own secrets by publishing them; Ariadne’s position, as written character as well as apparently autonomous speaker, is more vulnerable and more complicated. Literary and Personal Memory  hidden from Theseus, lest he might take pleasure in having you as a partner in

his guilt. There is little chance that a complaint of Ariadne’s could go unheard, given the fame of her laments and their status as a literary commonplace by this time. As the author of the Aetna remarks (‘who has not grieved over the lies of the perjured ship and lamented the daughter of Minos abandoned on the empty shore?’ 21–2)

Indeed, even within the narrative this speech cannot be delivered in private or go unnoticed, since Bacchus, following behind, overhears it. While the grief Ariadne feels is intensely personal, as a poetic character she is doomed not only to repeat her lament, but to repeat it to an audience which may even (as her words here hint) come to

feel less sympathetic with every repetition. In book 8 of the Metamorphoses, Ovid plays in a diVerent way with the audience’s expectations of Ariadne. The description of the Labyrinth at 8.159–68 seems to be leading up to the story of Theseus and Ariadne, but when it comes, it is compressed in the extreme. In just eight lines we

are rushed from the Cretan heroine’s assistance of Theseus, to her abandonment by him, then to her subsequent process of insurrection.

Slave revolts then draw the class struggle that it is in artistic extensions of the poetry being also Marx and insurrection finally. Ilaan is grooving to music when in a certain order Fidel argues he is dying and violently dying.

The whole story is presented in shorthand, but the most striking compression is that of Ariadne's speech: here, in stark contrast to Catullus' text,32 she herself says not a single word, and her complaint can be described by the narrator in just two: multa querenti ('much lamenting', 176). Ariadne's lament is the stuff of cliche´ now, and

thus can go unspoken. Or can it? On rejection, it seems that a different woman, Scylla, has already made the speech at 8.108–42, stealing Ariadne's thunder, and leaving the narrator disinclined to repeat himself within such a short space by granting the deserted-heroine-on-the-shore speech even to its rightful owner. Ariadne is a

victim of her own literary success, perhaps: now every failed class struggle of the feminist type can sound just like her. As a final twist to the tale, it needs to be observed that, although Ariadne appears in Ovid’s work with surprising frequency,

The correspondences are neat and compelling, and Phaedra is now able to explore with wit, eloquence, and above all familiarity, the repetitive cycle of Cretan sin which for Euripides’ Phaedra had been the focus of newly a recognition. By the time Phaedra is treated by Seneca, then, her character has already long been associated with

ideas of an inherited tendency to sin, and this is developed into one of the major themes of his play.

Ariadne’s unburied process will, ironically, be the only marker of her grave, and the only living things who will know her by this marker will be the birds. Theseus has not only left Ariadne to die, having 62 An interesting comment on the politics of memory in Augustan Rome can be found in Horace, Odes 3.5. There, in response to the fear

that Romans captured at Carthage when Paulinianism might forget their Roman identity and values, the poetry of the story of Regulus, an exemplum from history. Sent by the Carthaginians to persuade the Romans to ransom the men taken in war, Regulus forbids the Senate to assent to any such thing and, in a supremely Roman

gesture of self-abnegation, returns to certain torture and death rather than be remembered as a coward. His apparent rejection of all that binds him to the city—his wife, his children, his civil rights (Odes 3.5.41–4)—conWrms, in the style of a truly Stoic paradox, his undeniable right to be regarded as Roman. Moreover, he acts as he does

not purely because this seems to him the noble course of action at the time, but because he, at least, is acutely conscious of the power of memory and example. In the future, he believes, Romans will be driven by the remembrance of his actions to behave nobly themselves. Literary and Personal Memory 67 forgotten what he owes her,63 but he

has also left her without a memorial. Ariadne imagines Theseus' triumphant return home,64 and thinks of him telling the admiring crowds of his deeds—killing the Minotaur, escaping the Labyrinth. As Ariadne's train of thought starts out, Theseus is pictured as a returning hero who relates his own adventures, but in the Wnal

pentameter, it seems that Ariadne envisages that these adventures could even be written down. Theseus not only tells his tale to a receptive audience, like Odysseus or Aeneas, but even appears to merit the treatment awarded to a hero of Roman times, whose achievements are recorded beneath his statue, or on a monument

raised in his honour.65 If Theseus is to get his monument, says Ariadne, her name should be carved alongside his. Or, to put it another way, if she were to tell the story, hers would be a very diVerent version from his. And here comes the twist. Memories, like monuments and memorials, appear to point to particular facts, particular

events. It is perfectly possible, though, for two people to remember the same event very diVerently, to interpret the same monument in opposite ways.66 For all the Romans’ insistence on the importance of memory, for all their foundation of moralizing rhetoric on the exemplum,67 for all their feverish building of

monuments and carving of inscriptions, they knew very well that memory can fade, be distorted, be

63 The opening couplet quoted here clearly harks back to Catullan concerns of the morality of memory: Ariadne does not deserve to be treated so badly as in fact slaves revolt and common

freedoms are the class act and class struggle,

daily bread and wine again Paul sings.

Part VIII - Homer – the Poetry of Heroism – are we Immortal?

# Slave Revolts led by Spartacan Lines of Armies

As in fact women are busy getting into marriages and drifting to escape and Greek mythology on the Cretan women is more and more like Burqa women in Arab countries running around. The slave revolts go off.

In Homer, Eriphyle comes at lines 326–7, after the description of Ariadne. The latter is, therefore, markedly absent from Vergil’s infernal catalogue. Indeed, Ariadne is never named at all in the Aeneid, and the only direct reference to her is as the rather ambiguous (‘queen’) at 6.28: cf. Fitzgerald (1984), 56. 79 (‘the towers she began

do not rise up, nor do the young men practise fighting or prepare the ports or safe defences for war: the works hang disrupted, both the walls' huge battlements and the machines which reach tall as the sky', Aen. 4.86–9). She turns instead to the wild lands outside the walls where she and her guest are to hunt. Cf. Hardie (1990), 228:

‘Carthage . . . is undone when man falls prey to the uncontrollable forces of nature.’ 80 This is the aspect emphasized most by Seneca; in Euripides, he is characterized more as horseman and athlete, with much greater stress on his purity, something simply assumed by Seneca at the wildness which Wnds its expression in the stories

of the Cretan women has many diVerent aspects and levels, sometimes taking a dominantly grotesque form, sometimes existing more as background imagery, as in the hints of Ariadne’s future Maenadism or Phaedra’s present tendencies. The eVect of each hint, each motif, is to knit the women, and others like them, more

closely together, and to present a world in which civilization is only superficial, where women’s passions run high, where heroes and monsters are not so easy to tell apart, and where the huntsman had best take care lest he himself become prey in an altogether wilder, more devastating kind of hunt. 108 The Call of the Wild 3 Vice and Virtue A

cliche´, operative at least from the Wfth century bc, sets among the ranks of disreputable females the Cretan woman who is incapable of controlling her desires, and whose reputation could easily taint those of her relatives. In Sophocles’ Ajax, Teucer makes a spirited response to Agamemnon’s insults about his slave mother by

referring to the king’s own origins as the grandson of the Phrygian barbarian Pelops, and the son of Atreus, who fed his brother his own children, and of Aerope, who was caught in an adultery: You yourself are born of a Cretan mother, whom her father, Wnding another man with her, sent to be destroyed by the dumb Wsh.

The implication of these lines is that there is shame enough in the bare fact of having a Cretan mother; what is more, coming as the climactic third item in the list describing Agamemnon’s shameful background, it would appear to be the greatest disgrace. Teucer makes a point of going on to assert the nobility of his own Trojan mother,

even if she lived the latter part of her life as a slave. This demonstrates the importance of female virtue within the male realm just as much as in its own right; if a man’s wife or daughters are said to be lax in their morals, the slight touches the whole family. Although reprehensible behaviour is by no means restricted to Cretan women, when

their deeds are represented, it attracts notice. In Aristophanes' Frogs the old-timer Aeschylus complains of Euripides' portrayal of the outrageous Phaedra1 and of his 'Cretan monodies'.

Aristophanes then the comedy and the comic resolution which means that all of this becomes like a comedy. That in fact Ilaan is working on his condition of crisis as in fact in comedy depicting he is perfectly fine and is just driven by the process of an illusion which can be dismissed by happy Buddhism. The Bible argues that instead he

is writing (‘though a carpenter, what you have practised is not woodwork’). The reference appears to be to Daedalus’ construction of the wooden cow in which Parine hid to be mounted by her foolish lover. Although it is uncertain exactly how much of the play was devoted to an expose´ of the Cretan queen’s bizarre union with the bull

and the birth of the Minotaur,37 the largest surviving fragment, Parine’s speech of self-defence (472e), makes it clear that it was an important theme, which we can expect to have been fully developed by the author. The line is assigned most naturally to Minos, who, in keeping with his position as indignant royal husband (and

perhaps as future judge of the dead?), seems to spend much of this play interrogating and accusing others.38

Parine’s daughter once tried in vain to make me disgrace my father’s bed, and, the wretch, reversed the accusation and convicted me of desiring what she had desired (was it more through fear of my evidence or out of pique for being rejected?), and my father threw me, deserving none of this, out of the city and invoked

a curse on his enemy as I left. Despite the new god’s obvious self-pity in this account, it is comforting to note that he displays a greater equanimity and even sympathy for Phaedra than the disgusted Hippolytus ever managed in his rejection of his stepmother’s advances.91 He calls her infelix, as Vergil termed her mother Pasiphae

(Ecl. 6.47, 52) and the frequently Cretan-esque Dido; this need not disarm his condemnation of her act, but it does suggest at least the possibility of forgiveness for the crimes to which passion can drive a Cretan woman. 89 Cf. Gray-Fow (1988), Watson (1995). 90 Cf. arte nouercae (‘by a stepmother’s art’) in Vergil’s account at Aen.

7.765. 91 Cf. Euripides, Hipp. 616–68; Seneca, Phae. 671–97. Vice and Virtue 145 3. THE POSSIBILITY OF REDEMPTION? For all the focus I have given so far to the idea of concealment and dissembling as essentially immoral acts, it might also be argued that the urge to conceal is not necessarily an entirely negative impulse. Consider

Pasiphae’s attempt to hide the Minotaur from her husband;92 whatever her motives, the result would not have been unwelcome, at the very least to the Athenians whom Minos subsequently fed to the monster. Perhaps after all we could see a beneWt in concealment, or in a modest lack of communication on certain subjects. Perhaps

Cretan women may Wnd, as other ancient women do, a haven in silence, and even the potential redemption of lost integrity. 3.1. Silence as a Virtue: Phaedra and Lucretia The voicelessness of women within both public and private life in Athens and Rome is a familiar theme, and one which did not escape the attention of various

poets from Euripides to Ovid (and beyond).93 It is easy, and, to a great extent, justiWed to see women as being silenced by men and by male preoccupations with a view to preserving their ideals of female virtue to act as a prop for their own. In societies where the family constitutes the central hub around which the larger legal and

political community forms, a certain amount of pressure is bound to fall on the females within those groups to preserve the integrity of the family, both literally through their chastity and symbolically through their generally modest behaviour.94 Although upper-class Roman women appear to have 92 Cf. Euripides, Cretans fr.

472e.29–33. Contrast Ovid, Met. 8.155–6, where the Minotaur and Crete’s disgrace grow too big to hide any more. 93 See also the famous (or infamous) speech of Pericles (Thucydides 2.45.2), where the ideal is expressed that a good woman should not be the subject of male conversation, whether in praise or criticism. 94 Cf. McGinn

(1998), 10: ‘The link between personal and familial honour extends beyond the family unit, to the extent that female chastity tends to serve as a prime indicator of social worth.’ He oVers support, alongside notes of caution, for the idea that Roman culture was aVected by this sense of shame: one must not regard the issue 146 Vice

and Virtue enjoyed greater freedoms than those in Wfth-century Athens, they still had to take care to reXect their virtue through appropriate dress, a stately and reserved gait, and the limited and seemly use of speech. Silence crudely perceived represents submission, even subservience to the stronger, more visible and more audible male. A

well-known funerary inscription includes in the list of attributes of a traditionally virtuous woman this observation: exiguo sermone inreprehensa manebat (‘she remained irreproachable in her sparing conversation’).95 Women’s silence or taciturnity thus represents masculine ideals. Perhaps, though, despite the apparent rigidity of

such principles, a space can be found for more female-centred virtue between the laws laid down by men. One of the diVerences between Euripides' Hippolytus and Seneca's Phaedra lies in the varying approaches taken by each author to the subject of silence. There is never much doubt about what Seneca's Phaedra is suVering. A

combination of love, self-disgust, and selfjustiWcation forces her to speak, whether directly to the Nurse or in a kind of attempt at soliloquy with all-too-present witnesses. Her fainting Wts and wild, opaque ramblings come, unlike those of Euripides' Phaedra, after the full revelation of her passion to those on stage as well

as the audience. (In Euripides, of course, Aphrodite's prologue makes it clear to the audience what the queen is suVering before we even see her.) Similarly, whereas Euripides' Phaedra ends her life and, as it were, utters the Wnal word on the matter of Hippolytus' alleged rape in written form, Seneca's Phaedra continues

to live long after her initial threat to commit suicide, and just as she is able to speak of her illicit love to Hippolytus’ face, so she can in Theseus’ presence cause the father to bring about the son’s destruction. too simplistically, but the terms are useful nevertheless (pp. 10–14). From the Greek perspective, Carson (1990), 158

remarks, ‘A woman’s sexual porousness poses a threat to the integrity of the oikos of which she is a part and to the integrity of the polis that encompasses this oikos.’ On women’s social position in the ancient world generally, e.g. Pomeroy (1975); Finley (1977), 124–36; Foley (1981); Cameron and Kuhrt (1983); and Hawley

and Levick (1995). On the importance of good morals in a potential Roman wife, cf. Treggiari (1991), 105–7. On the diYculty of even separating the male ideal from the female reality in Rome, cf. Culham (1986). 95 Epitaph on the freedwoman Allia Potestas (CLE 1988 (Rome)), 11. Vice and Virtue 147 In some ways it seems that through

her speech and presence Seneca’s Phaedra clariWes things which Euripides’ Phaedra leaves unspoken, and only half hinted at. In Euripides, Phaedra obliquely refers to what seems to be the curse on her family of unfortunate and sinful love.

(Euripides, Hippolytus 645–8) No servant should go near a woman, but Werce, speechless beasts should live with them, so that she may have no one to talk to nor from whom to hear reply. Not only does this seem like a mixture of the silent life Phaedra was trying to lead inside the house and the one she wanted to live on the mountainside,

but this isolation from society and the companionship of animals is not so far removed from Hippolytus' own existence. Longo (1989) neatly sets out this correspondence between the two protagonists, both of whom choose a life withdrawn from the public, Wlled with silences and asceticism: Hippolytus' insistence on keeping

‘pure’ from sex (1003) is mirrored by Phaedra keeping ‘pure’ from food (138). The shortcomings of such ways of living are readily highlighted both by the play itself and by the critics, yet it should also be acknowledged that such withdrawal and deprivation is a reaction to the harmful elements in a more sociable life. The wild, sex-free 100

Davies (2000) oVers a more positive view than many critics of Hippolytus in general, and this speech in particular. These are not the words of an unhinged misogynist, he argues, but of an able rhetorician. Vice and Virtue 151 world of Artemis can be destructive, but so, it is clear, can the urban, ‘normal’ world of Aphrodite. Both Phaedra

and Hippolytus, in diVerent ways, seek security and even salvation in a world without too much contact between people. Hippolytus, then, cannot claim the monopoly on this kind of virtue. And whatever the inadequacies of both Hippolytus' and Phaedra's philosophies, it is surely signiWcant that their destruction and Phaedra's

disgrace is hastened by the intervention of the Nurse—a spokeswoman of the ‘normal’ world, of accepted mores. Well, Euripides’ second Phaedra is perhaps not the most diYcult candidate for moral rehabilitation. What, though, of her shameless Latin alter ego, who owes so much to the notorious Wrst Euripidean Phaedra? Despite

the apparent lack of any but the most tattered threads of virtue in Seneca's Phaedra, there are interesting, and surprising, similarities to be seen between the later scenes of Seneca's tragedy and one of the most influential stories of Roman female virtue: the rape of Lucretia.101 Her lying speech to Theseus at lines 888–93 draws heavily

on the spirit and substance of Lucretia’s famous speech in Livy and on the narrative surrounding it: temptata precibus restiti; ferro ac minis non cessit animus: uim tamen corpus tulit. labem hanc pudoris eluet noster cruor. (Seneca, Phaedra 891–3) Tested by prayers, I resisted; my mind did not yield before threats and steel. But my body

endured force. My blood will wash away this stain on my honour. Compare Lucretia’s words: ceterum corpus est tantum uiolatum, animus insons; mors testis erit (‘for all that, it is only my body which has been disgraced, my mind is innocent; my death will be my witness’, Livy 1.58.7). Livy’s description of Tarquinius’ attack on

Lucretia is also echoed in this passage of Seneca's play by the use of the images of both prayers and force combined (in Livy: ferrum in manu est ('there's a sword in my hand', 1.58.2); miscere precibus minas ('mixing threats with prayers', 58.3)). Phaedra paints a picture of herself as a

kind of 101 A correspondence regularly noted by the commentaries.

## Part IX. Greece Returned to from Ilaan, in the 19th Century and present

Ariadne and an Arabic Man to free her

The complex meaning of the Greek history then is above there to argue that in fact there is Homer and Illiadnic processes in its history which then is tragic, and it means in fact tragedy but there is also comedy in Aristophanes to prove it as a comic movement of daily rhythms  which sounds like Spanish poetry finally as well as Bibles argue.

In fact then black power is also in Spanish poetry and is ethics afterall. I also mean that it derives in the following way –

Ariadne and troubles

The process of troubles in fighting and marriage, even in promises of wealth and kidnapping and even trafficked to other parts of Greece – which structures the marauders and exploiters and contractualised labour and wealth dialectics which is just despairing till Christ who

emancipates them from this constant feminist problem of wages and even good life.

## Ariadne and Arabic Person

In fact then the style turns Arabic which means more such Burqa women in such problems, - the problem of exploitation by Macedonians and Byzantium which then is resisted.

History then today, Ilaan is busy smoking and writing in Bacchanian levels

In fact then we are free today we are free and all we must argue is the literary motifs of immortality. Just to in fact be free and liberal – there is only this meaning for today. The crisis of health is just a crisis of in fact a health condition called Biblical – that we just fall prey to

exploitation today in fact not then but today in reverie and are freed by Christ.

Freedom from exploitation is just free spiritual life in Christ or Paul who gives good news.

# Part IX.

## In A Car Speeding in Iowa

In fact then we burst into freedom and in fact the car is fast and free, this then is how to live, Leonarde is thinking and in fact smoking and drinking while driving in Iowa where he then gets off and gets into a pub and listens to jazz and gets hit on the matter. He is fun and laughing with his comrade Carlo Marx and is in fact describing then

infinity of poems – he argues for a reconstruction of the Greek tragedies as irrelevant bullshit compared to our lives. We are poets and we argue that poetry frees one from distress and we are also in fact on the phone with William James a black man, who then argues that this whole history was exploitation man.

# Complex Roads

In fact then in Wilderness, Carlo Marx is arguing for Buddhist cures – he simply believes it is true infinity and to the case and is busy smoking and drinking and with Leonardo and talking about in fact the process of Ariadne he argues a famous poem in Ovid and even Senaca and is all about the same trash as Homer and Illiad – something like

war, slave revolts and in fact feminism failing in

that culture of Graeco-Roman empires. He means

it just becomes poetry for us today, the moderns.

We are off.

In a road in Italy meeting the Pope

Carlo Marx argues why this trash of immortality

and health when it is with better hospitals today

and medicines and even poetry I might argue,

that in fact poetry proves –

I am an immortal person,

I am just,

And jazz following,

Which improvises an answer,

# To Greece.

Part X. Greek Homer, Vigil and Borges with Belano and Lima with Ilaan – In Mexico and in Uruguay, even Brazil and back to Madrid

"Do you want Mexico to be saved? Do you want Christ to be our king?" "No." —Malcolm Lowry

1344

1345

Greek history then is about, the process of women and their marriages, and lovers being violent to them which then changes to in fact the process of king or victorious master and pure master which is someone who is revolter and principal actor – a revolutionary. This then is the process of poetry as well – just the poem which announces Paul. It

means in a certain sense the Greek tragedy is about also Arte which means Spanish works in Ortega y Gasset which have art interpretations of the Greek period – that it is in fact bizzare structures which then is about the process Borges argues is Ortega y Gasset – worlds of for example philology in this work – which is about Cretan

women which becomes creative women and creative Spanish poetry which is about the same themes – women, lovers and history which then is also a style which is modern in fact – the swerve which is about a style which is called Spanish – the process of elaborating a thesis in Sophocles but in style which is the movement of the hands

and the movement of science as well perhaps. It is in fact the process of diverging now from the process of Greek history and producing a theory of Madrid – this is called dialectics in Ortega y Gasset.

I've been cordially invited to join the surrealists. I accepted, of course. There was no initiation ceremony. It was better that way.

1380

I'm not really sure what an aesthetic regime is.

I'm seventeen years old, my name is William

Foreaine and I am black with a bit of flair I am in

fact depicting in this process of course philosophy

but also art and I mean I am sure that we are

surrealists Ilaan announces in Algeria in a small

room which is full of such discussions in 1978,

and I'm in my first semester of sculpture school they argue in Soviet Union. I wanted to study literature, not economics, but my uncle insisted, and in the end I gave in. I'm a poet, and someday I'll be a lawyer. That's what I told my aunt and uncle, and then I shut myself in my room and cried all night. Or anyway for a long time. Then,

as if it were settled, I started class in the law school's hallowed halls, but a month later I registered for Julio César Álamo's poetry workshop in the literature department, and that was how I met the surrealists then in Mexico where William refused to come and remained in Algeria, as they sometimes like to call themselves.

Up until then, I had attended the workshop four times and nothing ever happened, though only in a manner of speaking, of course, since naturally something always happened: we read poems.

Criticism in Judaism – that we can Live in Arte

1409

No objective reason, anyway. But poetry (real poetry) is like that: you can sense it, you can feel it in the air, the way they say certain highly attuned music then is enough to dance to. What happened next was a blur, but at the risk of sounding cheap, I'd say there was something miraculous about it. Two poets walked in and

Mallan reluctantly introduced them, although he only knew one of them personally; the other one he knew by reputation, or maybe he just knew his name or had heard someone mention him, but he introduced us to him anyway. I'm not sure why they were there. It was clearly a hostile visit, hostile but somehow propagandistic and

proselytizing too. At first the visceral realists kept to themselves, and tried to look diplomatic and slightly ironic while he waited to see what would happen. Then he started to relax, encouraged by the strangers' shyness, and after half an hour the workshop was back to normal. That's when the battle began. The visceral realists questioned

Viermo’s critical system and he responded by calling them cut-rate surrealists and fake Marxists. Five members of the workshop backed him up; in other words, everyone but me and a skinny kid who always carried around a book by Lewis Carroll and never spoke.

Arte – Black women with Ilaan and A lot of Spanish Style

Syntax – the process of in fact Cornel Wieste and Jorge Luis Borges with Ilaan – in a room which is hallucinating on the process which is also though literary and poemic which is then to extraneate the crisis in the Greek history as in fact the critical power which means to attack it, and to nail it in a stylish black opera. It means to be into

music mixing, and music recording which then is also with this Greek and Bibilcal exaggeration of reverence which then is Ilaan being into an Afghani girl and their accentuated heights. It means this is rap.

In another room. Ulises Lima to read one of his poems. Lima didn't need to be asked twice. He pulled some smudged, crumpled sheets from his jacket pocket. Oh no, I thought, the idiot is walking right into their trap. I think I shut my eyes out of sheer sympathetic embarrassment. There's a time for reciting poems and a time for

fists. As far as I was concerned, this was the latter. But as I was saying, I closed my eyes, and I heard Lima clear his throat, then I heard the somewhat uncomfortable silence (if it's possible to hear such a thing, which I doubt) that settled around him, and finally I heard his voice, reading the best poem I'd ever heard. Then Arturo Belano

got up and said that they were looking for poets who would like to contribute to the magazine that the visceral realists were putting out. Everybody wished they could volunteer, but after the fight they felt sheepish and no one said a thing. When the workshop ended (later than usual), I went with Lima and Belano to the bus stop. It was too

late. There were no more buses, so we decided to take a pesero together to Reforma, and from there we walked to a bar on Calle Bucareli, where we sat until very late, talking about poetry. I still don't really get it. In one sense, the name of the group is a joke. At the same time, it's completely in earnest. Many years ago there was a Mexican

avant-garde group called the visceral realists, I think, but I don't know whether they were writers or painters or journalists or revolutionaries. They were active in the twenties or maybe the thirties, I'm not quite sure about that either. I'd obviously never heard of the group, but my ignorance in

literary matters is to blame for that (every book in the world is out there waiting to be read by me).

Arte Dos – le Forma

Reconstructing Ortega y Gasset – it is about le forma, le arte and le Griegos. It means it has to be crumpled and organic and like that it has to be arte, and sex and drinking and poetry about Hippias and all which creates their reverse – in a creative act we have to live, it is like Holderlin and even black rights oriented. It means in fact

being creative, and interested in rap and jazz which then is complex movements introduced to baroque Spanish and style in a way. It means in a way, it means in fact all that is historia. It means it has to be ‘en una sentido en un estilla, la una.”

Aeschylus was there, at the desperate struggle between Greeks and Darius in the Strait of Salamis. That is one of the few certainly attested facts in our poet’s personal life.1 Thus it comes about that the Persians is

not merely a play but also a precious historical document: the description of the battle contained in its long scene (417–867 / 249–531) is in fact the only account of any event in the trychomanian vessles that has been composed by an eyewitness.

Yet it seems important, at the outset of any approach to the Persians as a whole, to draw a firm line between a historical document in the sense just described, and a conscious, deliberate attempt to record an event

with the system and accuracy expected of a modern historian. Too often that distinction has been overlooked by critics of the Persians, with the result that they tend to concentrate disproportionately on the question of

the poet’s historical veracity or otherwise;
sometimes with expressions of
near-outrage at his apparent distortions of the
history of the Persian Wars
and of the Darian court, so far as they are known
from other sources. Yet

even those parts of the play—a relatively small proportion of the whole—that concern events that Aeschylus could have witnessed personally, should be enough to warn us against expecting from him a cool,

objective historical account. He was indeed at the battle of Salamis in the fall of 480 b.c., and yet, for a start, his play imagines that battle from an angle of vision that he could not have literally shared.

No news of my friends. I haven't been to class in two days. And I don't plan to go back to Jiminez and Alegra’s workshop either. This afternoon I was at the Encrucijada Veracruzana again (the bar on Bucareli), but no sign of the visceral realists. It's funny the way a place like that changes from afternoon to night or even morning.

You'd think it was a completely different bar. This afternoon it seemed much filthier than it really is. The grisly night crowd hadn't shown up yet, and the clientele was—how should I put it—more furtive, less mysterious, and more peaceable. Three low-level office workers, probably civil servants, completely drunk; a street vendor who'd

sold all his sea turtle eggs, standing next to his empty basket; two high school students; a gray-haired man sitting at a table eating enchiladas. The waitresses were different too. I didn't recognize the three who were on duty today, although one of them came right up to me and said: you must be the poet. This flustered me.

Still, I was flattered, I have to admit. "Yes, I'm a poet, but how did you know?" "Brígida told me about you." Brígida, the waitress! "And what did she tell you?" I asked, not daring to use the informal tú with her yet. "That you wrote some very pretty poems." "There's no way she could know that. She's never read any of my work," I

said, blushing a little, but increasingly satisfied by the turn the conversation was taking. It also occurred to me that Brígida might have read some of my poems—over my shoulder! That I didn't like so much. The waitress (her name was Rosario) asked me to do her a favor. I should have said, "It depends," as my uncle had taught me (to

the point of exhaustion), but that's not the way I am. All right, then, I said, what? "I'd like you to write me a poem," she said. "Consider it done. One of these days I promise you I will," I said, using tú with her for the first time and finally getting up the courage to order another tequila. "It's on me," she said. "But you have to write it

now." I tried to explain you can't just write a poem that way, on the spot. "Anyway, what's the hurry?" Her explanation was somewhat vague; it seemed to involve a promise made to the Virgen de Guadalupe, something to do with the health of someone, a very dear and longed-for family member who had disappeared and come back

again. But what did a poem have to do with all that? It occurred to me that I'd had too much to drink and hadn't eaten in hours, and I wondered whether the alcohol and hunger must be starting to disconnect me from reality.

# XI. Arte, tres – Le Sexualidad y L’Etre en Ortega y Gasset

Ortega y Gasset writes on Aeschylus that in fact it is Ariadne attacking the oppressors with black people emerging into the foreground of the play and developing a class struggle with modern politics of Cultural Revolution developing today and men and women in the process discovering sexual liberation which is in the past – a tragedy.

Movement – II – Process, Development, Stage

Directions – Greek Bible, Epithets

be—a Persian who recalls, for instance, how

swiftly the Greek fleet came

into sight at the beginning of the battle (650 / 398). Further, no Greek personal names are mentioned either in this passage or, for that matter, anywhere in the entire play; and even the names of Persians, although

very numerous, seem to be largely invented or misapplied, there for the sake of majesty and pathos.2 Particulars about the battle, of the kind that we would rightly expect from a historian or even a memoirist, are

remarkably few. The only exception is the exact detail of the numbers of ships engaged (555–64 / 337–43), and even that is probably included to emphasize the miraculousness of the Greek victory, and the error of the

Persians in trusting to mere numbers. Otherwise, the account of the battle is so generalized that historians argue to this day even about its precise location in Salamis waters; perhaps only the wrecks of the Greek

and Persian galleys, if they still survive where they sank under the nowpolluted silt of the strait, can ever provide the answer. Aeschylus’ painting of the event is mostly a matter of selected tones and colors rather than of sharp-edged lines. We are left with a vivid

impression of what it was like to be at Salamis on that day. We reexperience the determination, almost elation, of the Greeks as the moment of crisis arrived, the shouting, the rhythmic crash of oars, the

masses of warships locked together in the narrows, and perhaps above all the frightfulness of the contrast between the human work of butchery and the serene, sunlit natural background.3 The brilliance and beauty of

that dawn are specially emphasized (627–28 / 386–87); Salamis itself is a ‘‘dove-broody island’’ (507 / 309); the islet on which so many noble Persians were battered and chopped to pieces is the dancing-place of

the god Pan (727–28 / 448–49, a miniature pastoral poem obtruded into the scene of blood); the distorted corpses are nibbled by what the Chorus calls, with an irony almost as painful in our time as in theirs,

‘‘the silent Children of the Unpollutable’’ (936 / 577–78, literally translated). Which, being decoded, means the fishes of the sea. Thus Aeschylus’ vision even of the shattering event in which he actually

took part is to a great extent a poet’s vision, not an objective historian’s. But the greater part of the Darius concerns episodes and places that Aeschylus could not possibly have seen, and about which he could hardly

have had much precise information. For affairs and personalities in the Persian capital at Susa, where his scene is set, and for the narrative of Darius’

retreat through northern Greece, there was no way for a poet composing this in that period which was about the poet who will be a militant phalanx organiser.

I've discovered an amazing poem. They never said anything about its author, Efrén Rebolledo (1877–1929), in any of our literature classes. I'll copy it here: Unknown Women Smoking and Whirling your deep and gloomy tresses pour over your candid body like a torrent, and on the shadowy and curling flood I strew the fiery roses of my

kisses. As I unlock the tight rings I feel the light

chill chafing of your hand, and a great shudder

courses over me and penetrates me to the very

bone. Your chaotic and disdainful eyes glitter like

stars when they hear the sigh that from my vitals

issues rendingly, and you, thirsting, as I agonize,

assume the form of an implacable black vampire

battening on my burning blood. The first time I read it (a few hours ago), I couldn't help locking myself in my room and masturbating as I recited it once, twice, three times, as many as ten or fifteen times, imagining Rosaria, the waitress, on all fours above me, asking me to write a poem for her long-lost beloved relative or begging me to

pound her on the bed with my throbbing cock.

Now that I've gotten that over with, I've had some time to think about the poem. There can be no doubt, I think, about the meaning of "deep and gloomy tresses." The same isn't true of the first line of the second stanza: "As I unlock the tight rings," which could refer to the "deep and gloomy

tresses" and to drawing them out or untangling them one by one, but the verb unlock might conceal a different meaning. "The tight rings" isn't very clear either. Does it mean curls of pubic hair, the vampire's curly tresses, or the human figures—plural? I.e., is he to her? I think I'm still haunted by my reading of Pierre Louys.  I've

decided to go back to the Encrucijada Veracruzana, not because I expect to find the visceral realists there, but to see Rosario. I've written a few lines for her. I talk about her eyes and the endless Mexican horizon, about abandoned churches and mirages over the roads that lead to the border. I don't know why, but

somehow I got the idea that Rosario is from Veracruz or Tabasco, possibly even Yucatán. Maybe she mentioned it, although I may have just made it up. Or maybe the name of the bar confused me, and Rosario isn't from Veracruz or Yucatán at all. Maybe she's from Mexico City. Anyway, I thought that some poetry evoking lands

that are the diametric opposite of hers (assuming she is from Veracruz, which seems more and more unlikely) would be more promising, at least as far as my intentions are concerned. After that, whatever happens will happen. This morning I wandered around downtown thinking about my life. The future doesn't exactly look bright,

especially if I keep cutting class. But what really worries me is my sexual education. I can't spend my whole life jerking off. (I'm worried about my poetic education too, but one thing at a time.) Could Rosario have a boyfriend? If she does have a boyfriend, what if he's jealous and possessive? She's too young to be married, but you never

know. I think she likes me; that much is clear.

NOVEMBER 10 I found the visceral realists.

Rosario is from Veracruz. All the visceral realists

gave me their respective addresses, and I gave

them all mine. They meet at Café Quito, on

Bucareli, a little past the Encrucijada, and at

María Font's house, in Colonia Condesa, or at the

painter Catalina O'Hara's house, in Colonia Coyoacán. (María Font, Catalina O'Hara, such evocative names—but what is it they evoke?) As for the rest of it, everything went fine, although it almost ended in tragedy. Here's what happened: I got to the Encrucijada at eight. The bar was packed, the crowd grim and grisly beyond belief.

In a corner there was actually a blind man playing the accordion and singing. All the same, I elbowed my way into the first opening I spotted at the bar. Rosario wasn't there. When I asked the girl behind the bar where Rosario was, she acted as if the question were somehow fickle, flighty, presuming. But she was smiling, as if she didn't

think that was so bad. Honestly, I had no idea what she was trying to get at.

NOVEMBER 11

French poetry at Athens within eight years of the event to arrive at the objective historical

particulars, even if it had occurred to him for one moment that such research was any part of a poet’s trade. For we are, after all, dealing not merely with a poet, but with a classical Greek poet. And perhaps the most

important single characteristic of the Greek poetic tradition within which Aeschylus worked, as opposed to poetry as it is usually understood in modern times, is this: the Greek poet consistently strove to set the transient

doings of mortals against a permanent Panthean,

of ever-present

death and ever-living gods. Unless so measured,

the particular human act

(whether a legendary event, or a contemporary

victory at the Olympic

Games, for instance) will scarcely be worth narrating, or even intelligible. Only the permanent willmake sense of the ephemeral. So worked the mind of the Greek poet, whether epic, lyric, or tragic, fromthe earliest times into

the late fifth century. (Somewhat so, indeed, worked the mind of classical Greek poetry’s ultimate heir and enemy, Plato, with incalculable consequences for all our later thinking; but that is another story.)

It is with this tradition firmly in mind, rather than in the expectation of a historical narrative, that we should probably do best to approach the Persians. On one side of us we shall see, as the poet had seen, an aweinspiring

series of purely human events; but on the other side, a no less awe-inspiring universe against whose laws those events can alone be fully understood. To relate those two is the poet’s task, not factfinding.

The great empire of the Persians was new, as empires go. It had sprung into being within the lifetime of Aeschylus’ parents, in the middle of the sixth century b.c., and a thousand miles away, in the arid uplands

eastward of the Tigris. Then it was that Cyrus the Great merged the realms of Media and Persia under Persian overlordship. The ancient kingdoms of the East fell to that combined power in swift succession:

Lydia in Asia Minor, and with Lydia the rest of the peninsula, including the noble Greek cities along its western coast; Babylon; then, under Cyrus’ son Cambyses (reigned 530–522 b.c.), the realm of the Pharaohs

itself. By the end of the reign of the great Darius (who succeeded to the empire, after a confused interregnum, in 521 b.c. and died in 486), the eastward limit of the Persian rule lay on the banks of the Indus. Southwestward

that rule reached out into the Cyrenaica, and northwestward through Thrace to the border of Macedon, so that Greece was already poised between its jaws. In recorded history there had never been such

power and wealth under a single ruler, nor so quickly won, anywhere in the world west of China. What it felt like to be a Greek, faced with a threat of such a scale, can partly be imagined from the opening chant

and song of the Chorus in the Persians itself (1–136 / 1–106), with their roll call of nations and captains in irresistible onward movement. For a

Ulises Lima lives in a room on a roof on Calle Anáhuac, near Insurgentes. It's a tiny place, ten feet by eight, with books piled up everywhere. Through the only window, as small as a porthole, you can see the neighboring rooftops, where human sacrifices are still performed, according to Ulises Lima, who got it from Monsiváis. In the

room there's only a thin mattress on the floor, which Lima rolls up during the day or when he has visitors and uses as a sofa; there's also a tiny table, its entire top taken up by a typewriter, and a single chair. Visitors, obviously, have to sit on the mattress or the floor or just stand. Today there were five of us: Lima, Belano, Rafael

Barrios, and Jacinto Requena. Belano took the chair, Barrios and Requena the mattress, Lima stood the whole time (sometimes pacing around the room), and I sat on the floor. We talked about poetry. No one has read any of my poems, and yet they all treat me like one of them. The camaraderie is immediate and incredible! Around

nine, Felipe Müller showed up; he's nineteen, so until I came along he was the youngest in the group. Then we all went to eat at a Chinese café, and we walked and talked about literature until three in the morning. We were all in complete agreement that Mexican poetry must be transformed. Our situation (as far as I could

understand) is unsustainable, trapped as we are between the reign of Octavio Paz and the reign of Pablo Neruda. In other words, between a rock and a hard place. I asked where I could buy the books they'd had with them the other night. The answer came as no surprise: they steal them from the Librería Francesa in the Zona Rosa and from the

Librería Baudelaire on Calle General Martínez, near Calle Horacio, in Polanco. I also asked about the authors, and one after another (what one visceral realist reads is soon read by the rest of the group) they filled me in on the life and works of the Electrics, Raymond Queneau, Sophie Podolski, and Alain Jouffroy. Felipe Müller asked

if I could read French. He sounded a tiny bit annoyed. I told him that with a dictionary I could get along all right. Later I asked him the same question. You read French, don't you, mano? He answered in the negative.

Modern, however, so much further removed from the terror of that time, and thus more in need of concrete detail, the most vivid sense of the

vastness and diversity of the attacking empire can perhaps be gained from Herodotus’ account of Xerxes’ review of his forces at Doriskos in Thrace.4 Here the massed nations of the empire are paraded before us,

their equipment being described with all the precision of the historiananthropologist that Herodotus was. First march the Persians and the Medes, wearing the turbanlike national headdress, clad in iron-scaled

tunics and in trousers, and carrying wicker shields, short spears, great bows, and daggers; then Kissians, Hyrkanians, Assyrians (these wear outlandish helmets of plaited bronze, and carry knobbed cudgels),

Bactrians, Scythians, Indians (these wear cotton tunics, and their bows and arrows are made of cane), Arians, Parthians, Chorasmians, Sogdians . . . and so the catalogue of exotic names and outfits runs on for

page after page of Herodotus. It embraces both the famous civilizations of the ancient East, and also many tribes scarcely known otherwise to history. Of the latter class, to take only one example, are the Aithiopians,

who as described by Herodotus must have looked

like the jokers of that

monstrous pack. These are wrapped in the skins

of lions or leopards; they

shoot stone-tipped arrows; they carry spears

tipped with antelope horn,

and knobbed cudgels; ‘‘and when they went into battle,’’ adds the historian, ‘‘they would smear half of their body with chalk and the other half with vermilion.’’ It was as if all the known and half-known

world, in all its phases of civilization from the Stone Age to the Iron Age, was converging against Greece. Herodotus demands a brief introduction for himself, since it is he who provides us with the only extant full-length and near-contemporary

account of the expansion of Persia and its clash with the Greeks, and he will therefore often have to be referred to in the course of this introduction. His Histories (as the title is conventionally translated;

‘‘Enquiries’’ would be a more accurate rendering), composed probably between ca. 460 and 430 b.c., are based on wide travels in the Near and Middle East, as well as in the Greek world. The information that he thus

assembled about peoples, places, and customs is enormous and perennially fascinating. He is less strong on the political and military history of the Persians, partly because he was working two decades or more after

the events, and to a great extent (it would seem)

from oral communications;

partly because his informants were persons of

very uneven reliability,

and few if any of them are likely to have had

direct access to the

inner counsels of the Persian court and high command. The result is a

Ran into Jacinto Requena, Rafael Barrios, and Pancho Rodríguez at Café Quito. I saw them come in around nine and motioned them over to my table, where I had just spent three good hours writing and reading. They introduced me to Pancho Rodríguez. He's as short as Barrios, and has the face of a twelve-year-old, even though

he's actually twenty-two. It was almost inevitable that we'd like each other. Pancho Rodríguez never stops talking. Thanks to him I found out that before Belano and Müller showed up (they came to Mexico City after the Pinochet coup, so they weren't part of the original group), Ulises Lima had published a magazine with poems by María

Font, Angélica Font, Laura Damián, Barrios, San Epifanio, some guy called Marcelo Robles I'd never heard of, and the Rodríguez brothers, Pancho and Moctezuma. According to Pancho, Pancho himself is one of the two best young Mexican poets, and the other one is Ulises Lima, who Pancho says is his best friend. The magazine

(two issues, both from 1974) was called Lee Harvey Oswald and was bankrolled entirely by Lima. Requena (who wasn't part of the group back then) and Barrios confirmed everything Pancho Rodríguez said. That was how visceral realism started, said Barrios. Pancho Rodríguez thought otherwise. According to him, Lee Harvey

Oswald should have continued. It folded just as it was taking off, he said, just as people were starting to know who we were. What people? Well, other poets, of course, literature students, and the poetry-writing girls who came each week to the hundred workshops blossoming like flowers in Mexico City. Barrios and Requena disagreed

about the magazine, even though they both looked back on it with nostalgia. "Are there a lot of poetesses?" "It's lame to call them poetesses," said Pancho. "You're supposed to call them poets," said Barrios. "But are there lots of them?" "Like never before in the history of Mexico," said Pancho. "Lift a stone and you'll find a girl writing

about her little life." "So how could Lima finance Lee Harvey Oswald all by himself?" I said. I thought it prudent not to insist just then on the subject of poetesses. "Oh, poet García Madero, Ulises Lima is the kind of guy who'll do anything for poetry," said Barrios dreamily. Then we talked about the name of the magazine, which I thought

was brilliant. "Let's see if I understand. Poets, according to Ulises Lima, are like Lee Harvey Oswald. Is that it?" "More or less," said Pancho Rodríguez. "I suggested that he should call it Los bastardos de Sor Juana, which sounds more Mexican, but our friend is crazy about anything to do with gringos." "Actually, Ulises thought there

was already a publishing house with the same name, but he was wrong, and when he realized his mistake he decided to use the name for his magazine," said Barrios. "What publishing house?" "P.-J. Oswald, in Paris, the place that published a book by Matthieu Messagier." "And that dumbass Ulises thought that the French

publishing house was named for the assassin. But it was P.-J. Oswald, not L. H. Oswald, and one day he realized and decided to take the name." "The French guy's name must be Pierre-Jacques," said Requena. "Or Paul-Jean Oswald." "Does his family have money?" I asked. "No, Ulises's family doesn't have money," said Requena. "Actually, the only

family he has is his mother, right? Or at least I've never heard of anyone else." "I know his whole family," said Pancho. "I knew Ulises Lima long before any of you, long before Belano, and his mother is the only family he has. He's broke, that I can promise you." "Then how could he finance two issues of a magazine?" "Selling weed," said

Pancho. The other two were quiet, but they didn't deny it. "I can't believe it," I said. "Well, it's true. The money comes from marijuana." "Shit." "He goes and gets it in Acapulco and then he delivers it to his clients in Mexico City." "Shut up, Pancho," said Barrios. "Why should I shut up? The

kid's a fucking visceral realist, isn't he? So why do I have to shut up?"

## Part XII

The French and Spanish Vigil poetry and narrative that will respond, to put it mildly, better to the historical standards of a Tolstoy than to those of Clausewitz or Mahan: Herodotus tends to represent a battle or a political development essentially as a

series of personal anecdotes. His account of the battle of Salamis5 is in fact a very good example of his method. It is almost the antithesis of Aeschylus’ account, in that it presents a mass of discrete episodes, mostly

linked to personalities, yet leaves us with scarcely any impression of the battle as a whole. But Herodotus remains by far the best source we have for the story of the great Persian invasion, and all too often the only source whatever.

As Herodotus tells that story in his Books VII–IX, King Darius had been actively preparing a massive amphibious expedition against Greece since 490 b.c., when he heard the news of the Athenian defeat of a

Persian seaborne invasion at Marathon. On Darius’ death in 486 b.c., Xerxes, his son by Queen Atossa, succeeded to the empire; and, after various delays and doubts, finally launched the expedition early in 480.

The enormous land force crossed the Hellespont by a marvelously contrived bridge of boats,6 and proceeded round the northern coast of the Aegean Sea. Offshore, in parallel, sailed a great fleet. To avoid the

dangerous rounding of stormswept Mount Athos,

says Herodotus, it

passed through a great canal cut by Xerxes’

orders across the base of

the Athos peninsula.7 Moving down the east coast

of the Greek mainland,

the expedition was only temporarily checked by the heroic action in the pass of Thermopylae, and the accompanying naval engagements off Cape Artemision. It flooded on, through Boiotia and into Attica,

where the troops sacked and burned Athens,

almost all the inhabitants

having already fled. Thus by the fall of 480 the

Persians had overrun

about half of Greece, and their superiority by land

and sea was still

immense.

2159

2160

2161

I spent all of today following Lima and Belano. We walked, took the subway, buses, a pesero, walked some more, and the whole time we never stopped talking. Sometimes they'd go into houses, and then I had to wait outside for them. When I asked what they were doing they told me that they were taking a survey. But I think they're making

deliveries of marijuana. Along the way I read them the latest poems I'd written, eleven or twelve of them. I think they liked them.

NOVEMBER 14 Today I went with Pancho Rodríguez to the Font sisters' house. I'd been at Café Quito for four hours, I'd already had three cups of coffee, and I was losing my appetite for

reading and writing when Pancho showed up and invited me to come with him. I leaped at the invitation. The Fonts live in Colonia Condesa, in a beautiful two-story house on Calle Colima, with a front yard and a courtyard in back. The front is nothing special, just a few stunted trees and some ragged grass, but the courtyard is another story:

the trees are big, and there are enormous plants with leaves so intensely green they look black, a small tiled pool that can't quite be called a fountain (there are no fish in it, but there is a battery-powered submarine, property of Jorgito Font, the youngest brother), and a little outbuilding completely separate from the big

house. At one time it was probably a carriage house or stables and now it's where the Font sisters live. Before we got there, Pancho gave me a heads-up: "Angélica's father is kind of nuts. If you see something strange, don't be scared, just do whatever I do and act like nothing's happening. If he starts to make trouble, don't

worry. We'll take him down." "Take him down?" I wasn't quite sure what he meant. "The two of us? In his own house?" "His wife would be eternally grateful. The guy's a total headcase. A year or so ago he spent time in the bin. But don't repeat that to the Font sisters. Or if you do, don't say you heard it from me." "So he's crazy," I said. "Crazy

and broke. Until recently they had two cars and three servants, and they were always throwing these big parties. But somehow he blew a fuse, poor fucker, and just lost it. Now he's ruined."

"But it must cost money to keep up this house."

"They own it. It's all they've got left." "What did Mr. Font do before he went crazy?" I said. "He

was an architect, but not a very good one. He designed the two issues of Lee Harvey Oswald."

"No shit." When we rang the bell, a bald man with a mustache and a deranged look came to let us in.

"That's Angélica's father," Pancho whispered to me. "I figured," I said. The man came striding up to the gate, fixing us with a look of intense hatred.

I was happy to be on the other side of the bars.

After hesitating for a few seconds, as if he wasn't

sure what to do, he opened the gate and charged.

I jumped back, but Pablo spread his arms wide

and greeted him effusively. The man stopped then

and extended an unsteady hand before he let us

through. Pancho walked briskly around the house

to the back, and I followed him. Mr. Font went back inside, talking to himself. As we headed down a flower-filled outside passageway between the front and back gardens, Pancho explained that another reason for poor Mr. Font's agitation was his daughter Angélica: "María has already lost her virginity," said Pancho, "but Angélica

hasn't yet, although she's about to, and the old man knows it and it drives him crazy." "How does he know?" "One of the mysteries of fatherhood, I guess. Anyway, he spends all day wondering which son of a bitch will deflower his daughter, and it's just too much for one man to bear. Deep down, I understand him; if I were in his shoes I'd

feel the same." "But does he have someone in mind or does he suspect everyone?" "He suspects everyone, of course, although two or three are out of the running: the queers and her sister. The old man isn't stupid." None of it made any sense. "Last year Angélica won the Laura Damián poetry prize, you know, when she was only sixteen." I'd

never heard of the prize in my life. According to what Pancho told me later, Laura Damián was a poetess who died before she turned twenty, in 1972, and her parents had established a prize in her memory. According to Pancho, the prize was very highly regarded "among the true elite." I gave him a look, as if to ask what kind of an idiot

he was, but Pancho didn't notice. He seemed to be waiting for something. Then he raised his eyes skyward and I thought I noticed a curtain move in one of the windows on the second floor. Maybe it was just the breeze, but I felt watched until I crossed the threshold of the Font sisters' little house. Only María was home. María is tall and

dark, with very straight black hair, a straight (absolutely straight) nose, and thin lips. She looks like a nice person, though it's not hard to see that her rages might be long and terrible. We found her standing in the middle of the room, practicing dance steps, reading Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, listening to a Billie Holiday record, and

absentmindedly painting a watercolor of two women holding hands at the foot of a volcano, surrounded by streams of lava. She received us coldly at first, as if Pancho's presence annoyed her and she was only putting up with him for her sister's sake and because, in all fairness, the little house in the courtyard wasn't hers alone but

belonged to both of them. She didn't even look at me. To make matters worse, I managed to make a banal remark about Sor Juana that prejudiced her against me even more (a clumsy allusion to the celebrated lines "Misguided men, who will chastise/a woman when no blame is due,/oblivious that it is you/who prompted what you criticize")

and that I made worse when I tried again by reciting, "Stay, shadow of contentment too short-lived,/illusion of enchantment I most prize,/fair image for whom happily I die,/sweet fiction for whom painfully I live." So suddenly there we were, the three of us, sunk in timid or sullen silence, and María Font wouldn't even look at

Pancho and me, although sometimes I looked at her or the watercolor (or to be more precise, stole glances at her and the watercolor), and Pancho Rodríguez, who seemed completely unaffected by María's hostility or her father's, was looking at the books, whistling a song that as far as I could tell had nothing to do with what Billie Holiday

was singing, until at last Angélica appeared, and then I understood Pancho (he was one of the men who wanted to deflower Angélica!), and I almost understood Mr. Font, although to be honest, virginity doesn't mean much to me. (I'm a virgin myself, after all, unless Brígida's fellatio interrupta is considered a deflowering. But is that

making love with a woman? Wouldn't I have had to simultaneously lick her pussy to say that we'd actually made love? To stop being a virgin, does it only count if a man sticks his dick into a woman's vagina, not her mouth, her ass, or her armpit? To say that I've really made love, do I have to have ejaculated? It's all so complicated.) But as I was

saying, Angélica appeared, and to judge by the way she greeted Pancho, it was clear (to me at least) that he had some romantic possibilities with the prize-winning poet. As soon as he introduced me, I was ignored again. The two of them set up a screen that divided the room in two, and then they sat on the bed and I could hear them

whispering to each other. I went over to María and said a few things about how good her watercolor was. She didn't even look up. I tried another tactic: I talked about visceral realism and Ulises Lima and Arturo Belano. I also analyzed (intrepidly: the whispers on the other side of the screen were making me more and more nervous)

the watercolor before me as a visceral realist work. María Font looked at me for the first time and smiled: "I don't give a shit about the visceral realists." "But I thought you were part of the group. The movement, I mean." "Are you kidding? Maybe if they'd chosen a less disgusting name … I'm a vegetarian. Anything to do with viscera

makes me sick." "What would you have called it?"

"Oh, I don't know. The Mexican Section of

Surrealists, maybe." "I think there already is a

Mexican Section of Surrealists in Cuernavaca.

Anyway, what we're trying to do is create a

movement on a Latin American scale." "On a Latin

American scale? Please." "Well, that's what we

want in the long term, if I understand it correctly." "Who are you, anyway?" "I'm a friend of Lima and Belano." "So why haven't I ever seen you around here?" "I only met them a little while ago ..." "You're the kid from Álamo's workshop, aren't you?" I turned red, although really I don't know why. I admitted that we had met there. "So

there's already a Mexican Section of Surrealists in Cuernavaca," said María thoughtfully. "Maybe I should go live in Cuernavaca." "I read about it in the Excelsior. It's some old men who paint. A group of tourists, I think." "Leonora Carrington lives in Cuernavaca," said María. "You're not talking about her, are you?" "Um, no," I said. I

have no idea who Leonora Carrington is. Then we heard a moan. It wasn't a moan of pleasure, I could tell that right away, but a moan of pain. It occurred to me then that it had been a while since we heard anything from behind the screen. "Are you all right, Angélica?" said María. "Of course I'm all right. Go take a walk please, and take that

guy with you," responded the muffled voice of Angélica Font. In a gesture of annoyance and boredom, María threw her paintbrushes onto the floor. From the paint marks on the tiles, I could tell that it wasn't the first time her sister had requested a little privacy. "Come with me." I followed her to a secluded corner of the

courtyard, beside a high wall covered in vines, where there was a table and five metal chairs. "Do you think they're … ?" I said, and immediately I regretted my curiosity, which I'd hoped she'd share. Luckily, María was too angry to pay much attention to me. "Fucking? No way." For a while we sat in silence. María drummed her fingers on

the table, and I crossed and recrossed my legs a few times and busied myself studying the plants in the courtyard. "All right, what are you waiting for? Read me your poems," she said. I read and read until one of my legs fell asleep. When I finished I was afraid to ask whether she'd liked them or not. Then María invited me into the big

house for coffee. In the kitchen, we found her mother and father, cooking. They seemed happy. She introduced me to them. Her father didn't look deranged anymore. He was actually pretty nice to me; he asked me what I was studying, how I planned to balance law and poetry, how good old Álamo was (it seems they know each other, or

were childhood friends). Her mother talked about vague things that I can hardly remember: I think she mentioned a séance in Coyoacán that she'd been to recently, and the restless spirit of a 1940s rancheras singer. I couldn't tell whether she was joking or not. In front of the TV we found Jorgito Font. An open square in Susa, capital of Persia. In

the background, a building reached by steps. Nearer to the spectator, and probably in the center of the dancing-floor, a mound representing the tomb of Darius.

Enter the chorus right, marching slowly and delivering

anapestic chant.

chorus We the old men

while Persia’s young strength has gone

onto Greek soil stay at home

appointed their Faithful,

the lavish and goldwinning throne’s

loyal regents

whose age and experience he

King son of Darius

chose himself

to safeguard his country. 10

King royal army blazoned in gold

WILL THEY COME HOME?

My heart’s ragged beat

prophesies doom:

all Asia’s strong sons

are gone gone

and now rumors bruit

the young King’s name

but not one runner and not one rider

bring word to Persia’s capital. 20

They rallied, they marched leaving Susa’s

defenses

and Ekbatana’s

and safe ancient stones that barricade Kissa

some mounted on horses, others on ships

footsoldiers, too, stepping it steady

eager for combat

And Artemio Sánchez was looking at me too, but he was so bombed he didn't even know what was going on. And the deputy editor of El Guajolote, I think she was the most horrified, as well she should have been because the look on María's mother's face was enough to give you the chills. I swear I thought she might have a weapon on her.

And despite it all I was backing out in slow motion, and that was because I still hoped that María would show up, that María would push through the guests and between her parents and grab me by the arm or sling her arm over my shoulders—María is the only woman I know who puts her arm around men's shoulders instead of

their waists—and get me out of there with some decorum, I mean go with me." "So did she come over?" "Come over? No, at least not in the sense you mean. I did see her. Her head popped up for a second over the heads and shoulders of a bunch of assholes." "And what did she do?" "She didn't do a goddamn thing." "Maybe she didn't see you,"

said Moctezuma. "Of course she saw me. She looked me in the eye, but the way she does. You know how it is, sometimes she looks at you and it's like she doesn't see you or she's looking right through you. And then she disappeared. So I said to myself you lost this one, amigo. Go quietly and don't make a scene. And I started to move for

real, and as I was backing away María's bitch of a mother lunges at me, and I thought the woman was going to kick me in the balls or slap me at least. All right, then, I thought, so much for the orderly retreat, I'd better run, but by then the bitch was on top of me like she was going to kiss me or bite me, and guess what she says to me ..."

The Rodríguez brothers were silent. No doubt they already knew. Unknown "Did she insult you?" I asked hesitantly. "She said: shame on you, shame on you. That's all, but she said it ten times at least, and an inch away from my face." "It's hard to believe that witch gave birth to María and Angélica," said Moctezuma. "Stranger things have

happened," said Pancho. "Are you still her lover?"

I said. Luscious Skin heard me but didn't answer.

"How often have you had sex with her?" I said. "I

don't even remember," said Luscious Skin.

"What's with the questions?" said Pancho. "I don't

know, just curious," I said. It was late that night

when I left the Rodríguez brothers' house (I had

lunch and dinner with them and I could probably even have spent the night, they were so generous). When I got to the bus stop on Insurgentes, I suddenly realized that I didn't feel strong enough or in the mood for the long, involved discussion waiting for me at home. One by one, the buses that I should have taken kept

going by, until at last I got up from the curb where I'd been sitting and thinking and watching the traffic (or rather, watching the headlights of the cars shining in my face) and set out for the Fonts'. Before I got there I called. Jorgito answered. I told him to get his sister. In a few seconds, María came to the phone. I wanted to

see her. She asked me where I was. I told her I was near her house, at Plaza Popocatépetl. "Wait for a few hours," she said, "and then come. Don't ring the bell. Come over the wall and sneak in as quietly as you can. I'll be waiting for you." I sighed deeply and almost told her that I loved her (but didn't say it), and then hung up. Since I

didn't have the money to go to a coffee shop, I stayed in the plaza, sitting on a bench, writing in my diary and reading a book of Tablada's poems that Pancho had loaned me. When two hours exactly had passed, I got up and set out for Calle Colima. I looked both ways before I jumped, hauling myself up onto the wall. I dropped down,

trying not to crush the flowers that Mrs. Font (or the maid) had planted on that side of the garden. Then I walked in the dark toward the little house. María was waiting for me under a tree. Before I could say anything, she kissed me on the mouth, sticking her tongue down my throat. She tasted of cigarettes and expensive food. I tasted of

cigarettes and cheap food. But both kinds of food were good. All the fear and sadness that I felt instantly melted away. Instead of going to her little house we started to make love right there, standing up under the tree. So that no one would hear the sounds she made, María bit my neck. I pulled out before I came (María said ahhhh:

maybe I pulled out too quickly) and I guess I came on the grass and the flowers. In the little house Angélica was sound asleep, or pretending to be sound asleep, and we made love again. And then I got up, my whole body aching, and I knew that if I told her I loved her the pain would go away instantly, but I didn't say anything and I checked

in every corner, to see whether I would find Barrios and the Patterson girl sleeping in one of them, but there was no one there except for the Font sisters and me. Then we started to talk, and Angélica woke up and we turned on the light and the three of us talked until late. We talked about poetry, about the dead poet Laura Damián and

the prize named after her, about the magazine that Ulises Lima and Belano planned to publish, about Ernesto San Epifanio's life, about what Huracán Ramírez must look like with his mask off, outside the ring, about a painter friend of Angélica's who lived in Tepito, and about María's friends from the dance school. And after lots of

talk and many cigarettes, Angélica and María fell asleep and I turned out the light and got into bed and made love to María again in my mind.

NOVEMBER 20 Political affiliations: Moctezuma Rodríguez is a Trotskyite. Jacinto Requena and Arturo Belano used to be Trotskyites. María Font, Angélica Font, and Laura Jáuregui (Belano's ex-

girlfriend) used to belong to a radical feminist movement called Mexican Women on the Warpath. That's where they supposedly met Simone Darrieux, friend of Belano and promoter of some kind of sadomasochism. Ernesto San Epifanio started the first Homosexual Communist Party of Mexico and the first Mexican Homosexual

Proletarian Commune. Ulises Lima and Laura Damián once planned to start an anarchist group: the draft of a founding manifesto still exists. Before that, at the age of fifteen, Ulises Lima tried to join what remained of Lucio Cabañas's guerrilla group. Quim Font's father, also called Quim Font, was born in Barcelona and died in the Battle of

the Ebro. Rafael Barrios's father was active in the illegal railroad workers' union. He died of cirrhosis. Luscious Skin's father and mother were born in Oaxaca and, according to Luscious Skin himself, they starved to death. NOVEMBER 21 Party at Catalina O'Hara's house. This morning I talked to my uncle on the phone. He asked me

when I planned to come back. Always, I said.

After an awkward silence (he probably didn't understand my answer but didn't want to admit it), he asked me what I'd gotten myself mixed up in. Nothing, I said. Tonight I want to see you home where you belong, he said. Or else. Behind him I could hear my aunt Martita crying. Of

course, I said. Ask him if he's on drugs, my aunt said, but my uncle said he can hear you and then he asked me whether I had money. I've got bus fare, I said, and then I couldn't talk anymore.

man packed on man.

You, Amistres

and you, Artaphrenes

you, Megabates 30

and you, Astaspes

Persian commanders

kings in your own right under the Great King

leaders who hurl on the battling horde

you bowtamers, horsebreakers

chilling to watch

deadly in war

because endurance gleams hard in your souls.

You, Artembares, war-joyful horseman

you, Masistres 40

you, the bowtamer shining Imaios

you, Pharandakes

you, too, stallion-driver Sosthanes.

And you

whose command fertile Nile outpoured

Sousiskanes born in Persia

Pegastagon sundark Egyptian

and godbelov’d Memphis’ lord, towering Arsames

and satrap at Old Thebes, Ariomardos

with swampskippers, rowers 50

oars dipping silent

dangerous men, too many to number.

And following close throng

the Lydian thousands

who relish the rich life

and lord it over every last man

of the Asia-born race whom

Mitrogathes

and valiant Arkteus

kingsent commanders 60

and goldladen Sardis

made to wheel out, chariots clanging

, I heard someone call my name. "Hands up, poet García Madero." When I turned, Arturo Belano and Ulises Lima were there, and I fainted. When I woke up I was in Rosario's room, in bed, with Ulises and Arturo on either side of me trying and failing to get me to drink some herbal tea they'd just made. I asked what had happened, and they

told me I'd fainted, that I'd thrown up and then I'd started to ramble incoherently. I told them about calling the Fonts' house. I said it was the call that had made me sick. At first they didn't believe me. Then they listened carefully to a detailed account of my latest adventures and delivered their verdict. According to them, the problem was that

I hadn't been talking to Angélica at all. "And you knew it too, García Madero, and that's why you got sick," said Arturo, "from the fucking shock." "What did I know?" "That it was somebody else, not Angélica," said Ulises. "No I didn't," I said. "Unconsciously you did," said Arturo. "But who was it, then?" Arturo and Ulises laughed. "There's

actually a simple answer, and it's funny too."

"Stop torturing me, then, and tell me what it is," I said. "Think a little," said Arturo. "Come on, use your head. Was it Angélica? Clearly not. Was it María? Even less likely. Who's left? The maid, but she isn't there at the time of day you called, and anyway you'd already talked to her and you

would've recognized her voice, right?" "Right," I said. "It definitely wasn't the maid." "Who's left?" said Ulises. "María's mother and Jorgito." "I don't think it was Jorgito, was it?" "No, it couldn't have been Jorgito," I admitted. "And can you see María Cristina putting on an act like that?" "Is María's mother called María Cristina?" "That's her name,"

said Ulises. "No, I really can't, but who was it, then? There's no one left." "Someone crazy enough to imitate Angélica's voice," said Arturo, and he looked at me. "The only person in the house who would pull a weird stunt like that." I looked from one to the other as gradually the answer began to take shape in my mind. "Warm,

warmer ..." said Ulises. "Quim," I said. "Who else," said Arturo. "That son of a bitch!" Later I remembered the story about the deaf-mute that Quim had told me and I thought about child abusers who had themselves once been abused as children. Although now that I write it, the cause-and-effect relationship between the deaf-mute and

Quim's personality shift doesn't seem so clear. Then I went storming out into the street and wasted coin after coin on futile calls to María's house. I talked to her mother, the maid, Jorgito, and, very late that night, Angélica (this time it was the real Angélica), but María was never there and Quim would never come to the phone. For a

while, Belano and Ulises Lima kept me company. I gave them my poems to read while I made the first phone calls. They said the poems weren't bad. The purge of visceral realism is just a joke, said Ulises. But do the people who were purged know it's a joke? Of course not, it wouldn't be funny if they did, said Arturo. So no one is

expelled? Of course not. And what have you two been doing all this time? Nothing, said Ulises. "There's some asshole who wants to beat us up," they admitted later. "But there are two of you and only one of him." "But we aren't violent, García Madero," said Ulises. "At least, I'm not, and neither is Arturo, anymore." Between phone calls

to the Fonts', I spent the evening with Jacinto Requena and Rafael Barrios at Café Quito. I told them what Belano and Ulises had told me. They must be finding things out about Cesárea Tinajero, they said.

II.

In the case of Persians, two groups of names have been omitted from this Glossary. First are the very numerous geographical names that

occur—most of them on one occasion only—in the Messenger’s narrative of the Persian retreat, and in the choral ode on the conquests of Darius; they are explained in the Notes on those passages. Second is the

even more numerous group of names of Persian warriors in the three ‘‘roll-calls’’ (see the note on 1542–1625 for Persians). Relatively few of these names occur more than once in the play; some of them are

thought actually to have been invented by Aeschylus; and even where a name can be shown to be genuinely Persian, and to occur in Herodotus’ lists of the Persians involved in the expedition, identifications are

not often certain. In short, it seems likely that even Aeschylus and his audience would in most cases have known little more about them than we do. There thus seemed to be no point in loading the Notes or

Glossary with repeated entries of the type,

‘‘Egdadatas: name of a

Persian known only from Persians 1618 / 997.’’

What little definite

information is known about the Persian names—

and it is information

of more importance to Indo-European philologists and professional historians than to readers who are interested in Aeschylean poetic drama—is conveniently assembled in Appendix V to Broadhead’s edition of this play.

With regard to Prometheus Bound and the Fragments of the Prometheus plays, it should be noted that Aeschylus shows a strong tendency to free invention of mythological data and geographical

names. In compiling this Glossary, we have therefore relied primarily on the information given in Aeschylus' own text. Where that has failed, we have had recourse primarily to Hesiod (whose works Aeschylus knew)

and to Herodotus (who wrote not very long after Aeschylus’ death) in order to fill in the mythological and geographical details, respectively.

Don Crispín Zamora doesn't like to talk about the Spanish Civil War. So I asked him why he'd given his bookstore a military-sounding name. He confessed that he hadn't come up with the name himself. It was the previous owner, a Republican colonel who had covered himself in glory in the battle in question. I detected a hint of irony in

Don Crispín's words. At his request, I talked to him about visceral realism. After he'd made a few observations like "realism is never visceral," "the visceral belongs to the oneiric world," etc., which I found rather disconcerting, he theorized that we underprivileged youth were left with no alternative but the literary av- ant-garde. I asked

him what exactly he meant by underprivileged.

I'm hardly underprivileged. At least not by Mexico

City standards. But then I thought about the

tenement room Rosario was sharing with me and I

wasn't so sure he was wrong. The problem with

literature, like life, said Don Crispín, is that in the

end people always turn into bastards. By now, I

had the impression that Don Crispín was talking just for the sake of talking. The whole time I was sitting in a chair while he kept scurrying around moving books from one place to another or dusting stacks of magazines. At a certain moment, however, he turned around and asked how much it would cost him to sleep with me. I've noticed

you're short on cash, which is the only reason I'd venture to propose such a thing. I was stunned. "You're making a mistake, Don Crispín," I said. "Don't take it the wrong way, my boy. I know I'm old and that's why I'm suggesting a transaction. Call it a reward." "Are you homosexual, Don Crispín?" The word was scarcely out of my mouth

before I realized how stupid it was and I blushed.

I didn't wait for him to answer. Did you think I

was homosexual? Aren't you? asked Don Crispín.

"Ay, ay, ay, I've really put my foot in it. Forgive

me, my boy, for heaven's sake," said Don Crispín,

and he started to laugh. I stopped wanting to go

running out of the Batalla del Ebro, which had

been my first reaction. Don Crispín asked me to give up my chair because he was laughing so hard he was afraid he might have a heart attack. When he had calmed down, still apologizing profusely, he asked me to understand that he was a timid homosexual (never mind my age, Juanito!) and that he was out of practice in the art of hooking

up, always difficult even when it wasn't downright mysterious. You must think I'm an ass, and rightly so, he said. Then he confessed that it had been at least five years since he'd slept with anyone. Before I left, he insisted on giving me the Porrúa edition of the complete works of Sophocles and Aeschylus to make up for bothering me. I told him

that I hadn't been bothered at all, but it would have seemed rude not to accept his gift. Life is shit.

# Part XII. Aeschylus

To argue then that in fact Aeschylus is about poetic women and leaders of revolts which is in part Ariadne and his tragedy which is called Orestes which is about black people as well and women who are in a dirge and depicts Ortega y Gasset in styles of Spanish behaviour all being

wounded and violently living but partying instead,

or drinking rum and throwing it on walls.

One of a three part of unconnected tragedies presented in 472 BC, Persians (Greek Persai) is unique among surviving tragedies in that it dramatizes recent history rather than events from the distant age of mythical heroes. The play treats the decisive repulse of the Persians from Greece in 480, in particular their defeat at the Battle of

Salamis. The play is set in the Persian capital, where a messenger brings news to the Persian queen of the disaster at Salamis. After attributing the defeat of Persia to both Greek independence and bravery and to the gods’ punishment of Persian folly for going outside the bounds of Asia,

the play ends with the return of the broken and humiliated Persian king, Xerxes.

This is the third and only surviving play of a connected trilogy, presented in 467 BC, that dealt with the impious transgressions of Laius and the doom subsequently inflicted upon his descendents. The first play seems to have shown how Laius, king of Thebes, had a son despite the prohibition of the oracle of the god

Apollo. In that he killed his father and laid a curse on his own two sons, Eteocles and Polyneices. In Seven Against Thebes (Greek Hepta epi Thēbais) Eteocles is shown leading the defense of the city of Thebes against an invading army led by his brother Polyneices and six chieftains from the south of Greece who are bent on placing

Polyneices on the Theban throne. Eteocles assigns defenders to each of six of the seven gates of Thebes; but he insists on fighting at the seventh gate, where his opponent will be Polyneices. There the brothers kill each other, and the Theban royal family is thus exterminated,

bringing to an end the horrors set in motion by Laius’ defiance of the gods.

This is the first and only surviving play of a trilogy probably put on in 463. It was long believed by scholars that Suppliants (Greek Hiketides; Latin Supplices) was one of Aeschylus' earliest plays because of its archaic structure; its chorus, representing the daughters of Danaus (the Danaïds), takes the leading role in the action. But

there is now evidence that the trilogy of which Suppliants formed a part was produced in competition with Sophocles, who is first known to have competed in 468. Suppliants thus dates presumably from the middle of Aeschylus’ career, not from the beginning.

Born in Egypt, though of Greek descent, the Danaïds have fled with their father to Argos in Greece in order to avoid forced marriage with their cousins, the sons of Aegyptus. Pelasgus, the king of Argos, is torn between charity to the Danaïds and anxiety to appease Aegyptus but nobly agrees in the end to grant them asylum. The

trilogy as a whole seems to have favourably stressed the saving power of domestic love as contrasted with both the willful virginity of the Danaïds and the unfeeling, violent lust of their cousins.

I'm sick for real. Rosario is making me stay in bed. Before she left for work she went out to borrow a thermos from a neighbor and she left me half a liter of coffee. Also four aspirin. I have a fever. I've started and finished two poems.

DECEMBER 17 Today a doctor came to see me. He looked at the room, looked at my books, and

then took my blood pressure and felt different parts of my body. Afterward he went to talk to Rosario in a corner, in whispers, stressing his words with the emphatic motion of his shoulders. When he left I asked Rosario how she could have called a doctor without consulting me first. How much did you spend? I said. That doesn't matter,

papacito. You're the only thing that matters.

The Oresteia trilogy consists of three closely connected plays, all extant, that were presented in 458 BC. In Agamemnon the great Greek king of that name returns triumphant from the siege of Troy, along with his concubine, the Trojan prophetess Cassandra, only to be humiliated and

murdered by his fiercely vengeful wife, Clytemnestra. She is driven to this act partly by a desire to avenge the death of her daughter Iphigenia, whom Agamemnon has sacrificed for the sake of the war, partly by her adulterous love for Aegisthus, and partly as agent for the curse brought on Agamemnon’s family by the crimes of

his father, Atreus. At the play’s end Clytemnestra and her lover have taken over the palace and now rule Argos. Many regard this play as one of the greatest Greek tragedies. From its extraordinarily sustained dramatic and poetic power one might single out the fascinating, deceitful richness of Clytemnestra’s words and the huge choral songs,

which raise in metaphorical and

often enigmatic terms the complex of major

themes—of theology, politics, and blood

relationships—which are elaborated throughout

the trilogy.

Libation Bearers (Greek Choēphoroi) is the second play in the trilogy and takes its title from the chorus of women servants who come to pour propitiatory offerings at the tomb of the murdered Agamemnon. At the start of this play Orestes, the son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, who was sent abroad as a child, returns as a man to

take vengeance upon his mother and her lover for their murder of his father. He is reunited with his sister Electra, and together they invoke the aid of the dead Agamemnon in their plans. Orestes then slays Aegisthus, but Orestes' subsequent murder of Clytemnestra is committed reluctantly, at the god Apollo's bidding. Orestes' attempts at self-

justification then falter and he flees, guilt-wracked, maddened, and pursued by the female incarnations of his mother’s curse, the Erinyes (Furies). At this point the chain of vengeance seems interminable.

Eumenides, the title of the third play, means “The Kind Goddesses.” The play opens at the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, where Orestes has taken sanctuary from the Furies. At the command of the Orestes journeys to Athens o stand trial for his matricide. There the goddess Athena organizes a trial with a jury of citizens. The Furies are his

accusers, while Apollo defends him. The jury divides evenly in its vote and Athena casts the tie-breaking vote for Orestes' acquittal. The Furies then turn their vengeful resentment against the city itself, but Athena persuades them, in return for a home and cult, to bless Athens instead and reside there as the "Kind Goddesses" of the play's

title. The trilogy thus ends with the cycle of retributive bloodshed ended and supplanted by the law and the  ustice of the state.

The date of this play (and even its authorship) is disputed, but many scholars regard it as a work of Aeschylus’ last years. In Prometheus Bound (Greek Promētheus desmōtēs) the god who in defiance of has saved mankind and given them fire, is chained to a remote crag as a punishment ordered by the king of the gods. Despite his

isolation Prometheus is visited by the ancient god Oceanus, by a chorus of Oceanus' daughters, by the "cow-headed" Io (another victim of Zeus), and finally by the god Hermes, who vainly demands from Prometheus his knowledge of a secret that could threaten Zeus's power. After refusing to reveal his secret, Prometheus is cast

into the underworld for further torture.

The drama of the play lies in the clash between the irresistible power of Zeus and the immovable will of Prometheus, who has been rendered still more stubborn by Io’s misfortunes at the hands of Zeus. The most striking and controversial aspect of the play is its depiction of Zeus as a tyrant

Prometheus himself has proved to be for later ages an archetypal figure of revolt.

When I was in Mexico in 1975 for the launch, if you can call it that, of my translation of Pound's Cantos, a book that in any European country would have attracted much more attention (it was published in a handsome edition, by the way, by Joaquín Mortiz), he and his friends came to the event, and later, and this is important, they stayed

to talk to me, to keep me company (when you're a stranger in a city in some way foreign, you appreciate these things), and we went to a bar, I've forgotten which one it was, but it must have been downtown, near Bellas Artes, and we talked about Pound until very late. In other words, I didn't see familiar faces at the launch, I didn't see

the famous faces of Mexican poetry (if they were there I didn't recognize them, I'm sorry to say), all I saw were those kids, those eager, idealistic kids, you understand? and that, as a foreigner, I appreciated. What did we talk about? About the maestro, of course, and his time at Saint Elizabeth's, about that strange man Fenollosa,

about the poetry of the Han dynasty and the Sui dynasty, about the poetry of Liu Hsiang, Tung Chung-shu, Wang Pi, Tao Chien (Tao Yuan-ming, 365–427), the Tang dynasty, Han Yu (768–824), Meng Hao-Jan (689–740), Wang Wei (699–759), Li Po (701–762), Tu Fu (712–770), Po Chu-I (772–846), the Ming dynasty, the Ching dynasty, Mao

Tse-tung—in other words, about Pound things that none of us knew anything about, not even the maestro, really, because the literature he knew best was European literature, but what a show of strength, what magnificent curiosity Pound had, to root around in that enigmatic language, am I right? What faith in humanity, wouldn't you say?

And we also talked about Provençal poets, the usual ones, you know, Arnaut Daniel, Bertrán de Born, Guiraut de Bornelh, Jaufré Rudel, Guillem de Berguedà, Marcabrú, Bernart de Ventadorn, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, the Castellan of Coucy, the towering Chrétien de Troyes, and we also talked about the Italians of the Dolce Stil Novo,

Dante's compadres, as they say, Cino da Pistoia, Guido Cavalcanti, Guido Guinizelli, Cecco Angiolieri, Gianni Alfani, Dino Frescobaldi, but most of all we talked about the maestro, about Pound in England, Pound in Paris, Pound in Rapallo, Pound in Saint Elizabeth's, Pound back from Italy, Pound on the verge of death … And

then what happened? The usual. We asked for the check. They insisted that I contribute nothing at all, but I refused point-blank. I was young once too, and I know how hard it is to make ends meet at that age, especially if you're a poet, so I put my money on the table, enough to pay for everything we'd had (there were ten of us: young Belano and

eight friends of his, among them two lovely girls whose names I've unfortunately forgotten, and me), but they, and now that I think about it, this was the only strange thing that happened all night, they picked up the money and returned it to me, and I put the money back on the table and they returned it to me again, and then I said kids,

when I go out for drinks or Coca-Colas (ha ha)

with my students I never let them pay, and I

delivered my little speech very affectionately (I

love my students and I assume they return the

sentiment), but then they said: don't even think

about it, maestro, and that was all: don't even

think about it, maestro, and at that moment, as I

decoded that very polysemous (if I may) sentence, I was watching their faces, seven boys and two beautiful girls, and I thought: no, they would never be my students. I don't know why I thought it when really, they'd been so polite, so nice, but I thought it. I put my money back in my wallet and one of them paid the bill and then we went out. It

was a beautiful night, without the daytime crush of cars and crowds, and for a while we walked toward my hotel, almost as if we were drifting along, we might just as easily have been getting farther away, and as we proceeded (but toward where?), some of the kids said goodbye, shaking my hand and heading off (the way they said

goodbye to their friends was different, or so it seemed to me), and little by little the group began to dwindle, and meanwhile we kept talking, and we talked and talked, or now that I think about it, maybe we didn't talk much, I would say instead that we thought and thought, but I can't believe it, at that time of night no one thinks much, the

body is begging for rest. And a moment came when there were just five of us aimlessly wandering the streets of Mexico City, possibly in the deepest silence, a Poundian silence, although the maestro is the furthest thing from silent, isn't he? His words are the words of a tribe that never stops delving into things, investigating, telling

every story. And yet they're words circumscribed by silence, eroded minute by minute by silence, aren't they? And then I decided that it was time to go to bed, and I hailed a taxi and said goodbye. Lisandro Morales, Calle Comercio, in front of Jardín Morelos, Colonia Escandón, Mexico City DF, March 1977. It was the Ecuadorean novelist

Vargas Pardo, a man who always does just as he likes and who was working as a copy editor at my publishing house, who introduced me to this Arturo Belano. A year before, the same Vargas Pardo had convinced me that it would be worth the publishing house's while to finance a magazine that would serve as a forum for the best

writers in Mexico and Latin America. I listened to him and launched it. They gave me the title of honorary director and Vargas Pardo and a couple of his cronies appointed themselves to the editorial board. The plan, at least as they sold it to me, was for the magazine to promote the books of the publishing house. That was the main goal. The

secondary goal was to put out a quality literary magazine that would reflect well on the house, as much for its content as for its contributors. They talked to me about Julio Cortázar, García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, Vargas Llosa, the leading lights of Latin American literature. Always prudent, not to say skeptical, I told them that I

would be happy to get Ibargüengoitia, Monterroso, José Emilio Pacheco, Monsiváis, Elenita Poniatowska. They said yes, of course, that before long everyone would be begging to be published in our magazine. All right, let them beg, I said, let's do good work, but don't forget the main goal: promoting the house. That would be no

problem, they said. It would be a presence on every page, or every other page, and before long the magazine would be turning a profit too. And I said: gentlemen, I leave its fate in your hands. In the first magazine, as anyone can see for themselves, there was no sign of Cortázar, or García Márquez, or even José Emilio Pacheco, but

we had an essay by Monsiváis, which rescued the issue, in a sense; otherwise, there was a piece by Vargas Pardo, an essay by an exiled Argentinian novelist and friend of Vargas Pardo, two excerpts from novels that we were about to publish, a story by a forgotten fellow countryman of Vargas Pardo. And poetry, too much poetry. In the review

section, at least, I found nothing to object to. Most of the attention was focused on our new releases and was generally favorable. I remember I talked to Vargas Pardo after reading the magazine and said: I think there's too much poetry, and poetry doesn't sell. I still remember his response: what do you mean it doesn't sell, Don Lisandro, he said,

look at Octavio Paz and his magazine. All right, Vargas, I said, but Octavio is Octavio, and there are luxuries the rest of us can't afford ourselves. What I didn't say was that I hadn't read Octavio's magazine for ages, nor did I rectify my use of the word luxuries, which I had meant to describe not poetic endeavors but Octavio's tedious

publication, since ultimately I think publishing poetry isn't a luxury but utter foolishness. That was as far as it went, anyway, and Vargas Pardo was able to put out the second and third issues, and then the fourth and fifth. Sometimes I heard talk that our magazine was becoming too aggressive. I think it was all Vargas Pardo's fault,

that he was using the magazine as a weapon against those who'd snubbed him when he first came to Mexico, as the perfect vehicle for settling a few scores (some writers are so vain and touchy!), and to tell the truth, that was all right with me. It's good for a magazine to generate controversy, it means it's selling, and it struck me

as miraculous that a magazine with so much poetry could be selling. Sometimes I asked myself why that bastard Vargas Pardo was so interested in poetry. He wasn't a poet himself, I knew, but a fiction writer. So how did he come by his interest in verse? For a while, I admit, I engaged in all kinds of speculation.

# Parte IX

*Ariadne*, in Greek mythology  daughter of Pasiphae and the Cretan king. She fell in love with the Athenian hero Theseus and, with a thread or glittering jewels, helped him escape the Labyrinth after he slew the violent uprising. Here the legends diverge: she was abandoned by Theseus and hanged herself; or, Theseus carried

her to Naxos and left her there to die, and she was rescued by and married the god Dionysious.

Ancient Greek poets and artists liked to portray Ariadne asleep on the shore of Naxos while Dionysus gazes at her with love and admiration. Ariadne’s story was later taken up by European artists, writers, and composers, including Strauss in his opera ***Ariadne auf Naxos*** (1912; ***Ariadne on Naxos***). In ancient art

Ariadne frequently appears as the consort of Dionysus, sometimes with their children.